

The Kettle Falls Hotel

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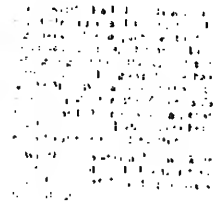


COMFORTABLE BEDS

EXCELLENT MEALS



Fishing



RESTFUL

HEALTHFUL

OWNED AND OPERATED BY R. S. WILLIAMS

Historic Furnishings Report

VOYAGEURS

KETTLE FALLS HOTEL

National Park / Minnesota

APPROVED:

Don Castleberry
Regional Director, Midwest Region

February 18, 1988

HISTORIC FURNISHINGS REPORT

KETTLE FALLS HOTEL
VOYAGEURS NATIONAL PARK
International Falls, Minnesota

by

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National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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particularly after 1956. During my visit to Voyageurs National Park in July 1987, I had the benefit of a tour of the hotel and falls area under the knowledgeable guidance of Chuck Williams, the current concessioner. Mr. Williams also provided free access to the Kettle Falls Hotel collection stored in several buildings at Kettle Falls while hotel renovation is under way. At a subsequent meeting with Charlie and Blanche Williams, Mike Williams, and June Williams Dougherty, I received answers to many questions about the furnishings and permission to copy and use in this report a number of family snapshots not previously seen by researchers. For their willing assistance in this project, I wish to acknowledge my deep gratitude.

I am beholden also to the superintendent and staff of Voyageurs National Park for information and support services, which have facilitated preparation of this report. In particular, I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mary Graves, cultural resource management specialist, and Catherine Wuvcha, summer intern, for their assistance in inventorying and photographing the hotel furnishings in storage at Kettle Falls and in bringing to my attention historical material in the park files and at the Koochiching County Public Library and the Koochiching County Historical Museum.

"Master Plan for the Proposed Voyageurs National Park," 1968.

"Voyageurs National Park Survey of Historical Structures," by J Hackett and Liza Nagle, 1975.

IDLCS: 09288, Management Category B: should be preserved. Added the National Register on January 11, 1976.

"Interpretive Prospectus," June 1981.

"Historic Structure Report, Kettle Falls Hotel and Associated Facilities," by Architectural Resources, Inc., December 19



The Kettle Falls Hotel is located at the eastern extremity of the Kabetogama Peninsula in Voyageurs National Park, about 50 miles east of International Falls, Minnesota. It is accessible only by water. Privately owned until its purchase by the National Park Service in 1977, the hotel continued to operate under a concession agreement with the former owners. The hotel was closed and emptied of its furnishings in 1986 to permit exterior restoration and interior adaptation by the National Park Service. It is scheduled to reopen as a concessioner-operated hotel in the late spring of 1988.

This report documents the history of the hotel furnishings during the period of private ownership (from 1910 to 1977) and provides some guidelines for the concessioner and the park administration in regard to use, interpretation, and preservation of the surviving furnishings. An inventory of hotel furnishings stored in various buildings at Kettle Falls in 1987 is on file at park headquarters.

The history of the Kettle Falls area is covered in considerable detail in the "Historic Structure Report: Kettle Falls Hotel and Associated Facilities," prepared for the National Park Service by Architectural Resources, Inc., Duluth, Minnesota, December 1981. The following section of this report presents a condensed, two-part chronology of 1) ownership, and 2) structural changes in the hotel from 1910 to 1977, followed by a more detailed account of the people associated with the hotel and a room-by-room analysis of room use and furnishings.

1918-1956	Robert S. and Hilma (Lil) Williams, operators
1956-1961	Lil Williams, owner-operator, assisted by and Blanche Williams
1961-1977	Charles R. and Blanche Williams, owners
1977-present	U.S. National Park Service, owner; K Hotel, Inc., concessioner since 1977; Williams, president, 1977-1982; Charles Williams, president, 1982-present)

Chronology of Structural Development

1910-1915. Hotel construction occurred in three stages. In 1910, the structure during the 1986/87 renovation revealed that the initial construction initially included only the east wing (lobby, dining room, and kitchen). By 1915 the north wing, comprising the barroom, storage rooms, and bedrooms, had been added. In a 1915 photograph (fig. 1), the apparent lack of paint on the porch suggests that it had just been built.¹

1915-1920. An undated early photograph shows that since 1915 the structure had been painted white and a small window for extra ventilation had been added.

1. Information from Mary Graves, cultural resource management specialist, Voyageurs National Park; 1915 photograph in the collection of the Koochiching County Historical Museum, International Falls, Minnesota.

1935. A photograph in the "1935 Tourist Edition" of The Daily Journal, International Falls, Minnesota, shows no change since the early 1920s, except that the trees had grown considerably.⁴

1938. A photograph in the "1938 Tourist Edition" of The Daily Journal shows lattice work under the porch for the first time, a fenced yard, and different trees.⁵

1942, June. A photograph (fig. 2) taken by former employee Norman Selsaas reveals several changes since 1938, including striped awnings over the bedroom windows, a canopy over the entrance steps, and flower beds but no trees in front of the hotel. A porch behind the kitchen is also visible for the first time; earlier photographs were taken too close up to show this, so its date is uncertain. This porch later became the auxiliary kitchen.⁶

2. Undated photograph, c.1920, in the collection of the Koochiching County Historical Museum.

3. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, "Historic Structure Report: Kettle Falls Hotel and Associated Facilities," by Architectural Resources, Inc. (December 1981), pp. 52-55 (hereafter cited as HSR).

4. The Daily Journal, International Falls, Minnesota, "1935 Tourist Edition," Koochiching County Public Library, International Falls.

5. The Daily Journal, International Falls, Minnesota, "1938 Tourist Edition," Koochiching County Public Library.

6. Original owned by Norman Selsaas, International Falls; copy negative, Voyageurs National Park.

power plant. Downstairs wiring replaced with Romex wiring installed in kitchen and a sink in the upstairs hallway. About the same time the back porch was converted into an auxiliary kitchen with a cooler, and the laundry was built on the east end of the kitchen.⁸

1961. A 10 KW Witte power plant replaced the Buda power plant. At the same time, the plumbing system was extended to provide women's toilets on the first floor (in a former storage area or barroom) and on the second floor (formerly bedroom 15).⁹

1962. The building was reroofed.¹⁰

1964. An addition, built at the north end of the second floor, contained two shower rooms, each with a lavatory and water closet. A phone was installed the same year.¹¹

1969. Witte power plant replaced with a 20KW General Motors power plant.¹²

7. HSR, p. 55.

8. HSR, pp. 42, 56, 104, and 187.

9. HSR, pp. 43 and 56.

10. Blanche Williams, interview, October 9, 1982, p. 4.

11. Mike and Chuck Williams, interview, February 10, 1978, p. 13.

12. HSR, p. 56.

1971. Bell Telephone system installed.¹⁴

1973. Bedrooms 3 and 5 combined to provide more space for Mr. and Mrs. Williams; electric fans installed in barroom.¹⁵

1974. Second floor rewired, replacing original 1918 knob-and-tube wiring with concealed wiring, pull chain lights with switch-operated lights.¹⁶

1978. Kitchen remodelled.¹⁷

1986-1987. Whole building renovated by the National Park Service.

Owners and Occupants of the Kettle Falls Hotel, 1910-1977

Ed Rose. Of the original owner, W.E. (Ed) Rose, little is known. The tradition is that his financial backer was a well-known madam and that resident "girls" were one of the establishment's attractions. The hotel also offered food, drink, and lodging to its guests, mainly construction workers on the Kettle Falls dams (1910-13), lumberjacks, and fishermen.

13. HSR, pp. 56-57.

14. Mike and Chuck Williams, interview, 1978, p. 13.

15. June Dougherty, interview, February 12, 1978, p. 16; HSR, p. 58; Mike and Chuck Williams, interview, 1978, pp. 4-5.

16. HSR, p. 57; Mike and Chuck Williams, interview, 1978, p. 6.

17. HSR, p. 189.

Bob and Lil Williams. Robert S. Williams, born in May Milwaukee, Wisconsin, moved as a young man to Fond du Lac. He was a chef at the Palmer House in Chicago before settling in Minnesota, in 1910. There he operated a hotel and nightclub. He took over the Kettle Falls Hotel as a supplemental source of income.

Williams married twice. His first wife was a divorcee, Charles, who took his stepfather's name. After her death, he married Hilma (Lil) Marie King in 1921.¹⁹

Bob Williams' main source of income was a nightclub in Ranier, which operated year-round. The hotel at Kettle Falls operated only from late spring to early fall, and its operation was under Mrs. Williams' responsibility. She did most of the cooking. An advertisement in 1938 called particular attention to her talent in this regard: "Long experience has taught Mrs. Williams what will do for the fisherman's appetite and the meals are all that is desired. Fish dinners here are a treat not soon forgotten."

18. Charles R. Williams, interview, August 16, 1976; Mary and Frank Ackerman, "Kettle Falls Hotel: North Woods Hotel," unpublished paper read before the Minnesota Historical Society, 1979, pp. 5-6.

19. Obituary of Robert S. Williams, Daily Journal, International News Service, Minnesota, July 2, 1956; Ron Schara, "Out-of-the-Way Inn," Tribune, no date, quoted in Pearson and Ackerman, "Kettle Falls Hotel," p. 10; June Dougherty, interview, 1978, p. 20.

20. "1938 Tourist Edition," Daily Journal, International News Service, June Dougherty, interview, 1978, p. 6.

Even after the dam workers and lumberjacks had passed from the scene by the mid-1930s, Kettle Falls still attracted a primarily male clientele whose goings on were not always suitable for the eyes and ears of children.

I wanted to work up there when I was a teenager, [says her granddaughter, speaking of the late 1940s and early 1950s] and she wouldn't let me. I thought she thought I was lazy, but I guess there were things going on that she didn't feel that I should be there, which I was never aware of; it was always discreet, whatever went on....²²

Lil Williams did not much like women guests, as she felt "maybe they'd be criticizing or snooping," but with the men she could be relaxed and informal.²³

Bob Williams spent most of his time running his night club in Ranier. During prohibition years (from 1920 to 1933) he also operated a number of stills and a distribution network for his own and smuggled liquor from Canada. Several large Red Wing stoneware jugs from one of the still sites are in the Voyageurs National Park collection.²⁴

Soon after Bob Williams' death at 77 on June 30, 1956, a new era began at Kettle Falls Hotel. Although Lil Williams carried on for a few more years as owner-operator, her health began to fail in 1958. She died in

21. Dougherty, interview, p. 6.

22. Ibid., p. 20.

23. Blanche Williams, interview, 1982, pp. 27-28.

24. Pearson and Ackerman, "Kettle Falls Hotel," pp. 12-13.

Charlie and Blanche Williams. When Blanche and Charlie Williams were helping Lil Williams at Kettle Falls Hotel during the summer of 1945, they had been married for nearly 25 years. Their oldest child, Blanche, was already married to Bill Dougherty; their first child, a son, died that day Grandpa Bob died that summer. Peggy Ann, aged 10, was the youngest of Charlie and Blanche's six children. Between Blanche and Peggy were four boys -- Dale (Bucko), 22; Robert (Robbie), 20; Mickey, 10; and Charles A. (Chuck), 8.

From 1956 to 1961, Blanche Williams helped her mother-in-law manage the hotel and gradually took charge as Lil's health declined. Charlie, employed at the paper mill in International Falls, came home on weekends; in 1957 and 1962, after back surgery, he spent the summer with the family at Kettle Falls.

With Lil Williams' death in 1961, ownership of the hotel passed to Charlie and Blanche. Four years later, Charlie Williams was the keeper of the dam at Kettle Falls and retired from the mill. After that, until 1977, Charlie and Blanche operated the hotel with help from family and a few hired employees. Blanche's sister, Casey, came up weekends to do the laundry. June and Bill Dougherty came up to help most weekends and the younger Williams children and other relatives, including Harold Jespersen and Sherry Casey Sterner, were pressed into service. Hired help tended to change from season to season, although some employees, like Jean Matson and Judy Lehtinen, who had worked in the late 1950s and early 1960s, returned for several seasons.²⁶

25. Blanche Williams, interview, 1978, p. 3.

26. *Ibid.*, pp. 2-4, 9-10, 12; family comments on draft report.

to the comfort and convenience of owners and guests alike. At the time, a strong effort was made to preserve the flavor of earlier days, the furnishings and in the menu. Sport fishermen still predominated among the guests, but more couples and mixed groups began to turn up. On a busy weekend in the 1960s there might be as many as 190 people for Sunday dinner and every room occupied for the weekend. Fishing, of course, was the main attraction, but the bar, in Blanche's words, "always made a good living."²⁷

Kettle Falls depended less on commercial advertising to attract customers than on the good word passed by satisfied customers to their friends. A high proportion of guests were repeaters, some for as long as thirty seasons. These visitors tended to cherish the hotel's nostalgic, somewhat raffish atmosphere, particularly the wildly uneven floors and sagging joists, which earned it in later years the nickname, "tiltin' Hilton."²⁸

Charlie and Blanche, having sold the hotel in 1977 to the National Park Service, decided to retire at the end of that season. As in years past, they celebrated with a "closing party."

People that we invited [explains Blanche Williams] were people from the other resorts because they sent us business all the time and it was a way to show our appreciation. We used to have all the stuff that was left, and I would invite them if they wanted to come Friday night and stay through Saturday night and leave Sunday. Oh, we used to have the best parties.... It was just a lot of fun.²⁹

27. Ibid., pp. 8 and 29.

28. Ibid., pp. 26-27; poster, Kettle Falls Hotel collection.

29. Blanche Williams, interview, 1982, pp. 29-31.

Williams has held the concession.

The hotel was closed in 1986 to permit renovation and extension by the National Park Service. It is scheduled to re-open in 1988.

(in parentheses) are those assigned in the Historic Structure Report (see Base Information Floor Plans, pages 9-10, reproduced on pages 14 and 15).

Porch (101, West Porch; 104, East Porch)

As originally built about 1915, the screened porch extended across the south front of the hotel from the barroom to the dining room. The front steps, east of center, were originally uncovered, but since the mid-1930s have been roofed over.¹ Sometime after 1961 the porch was divided into two sections.

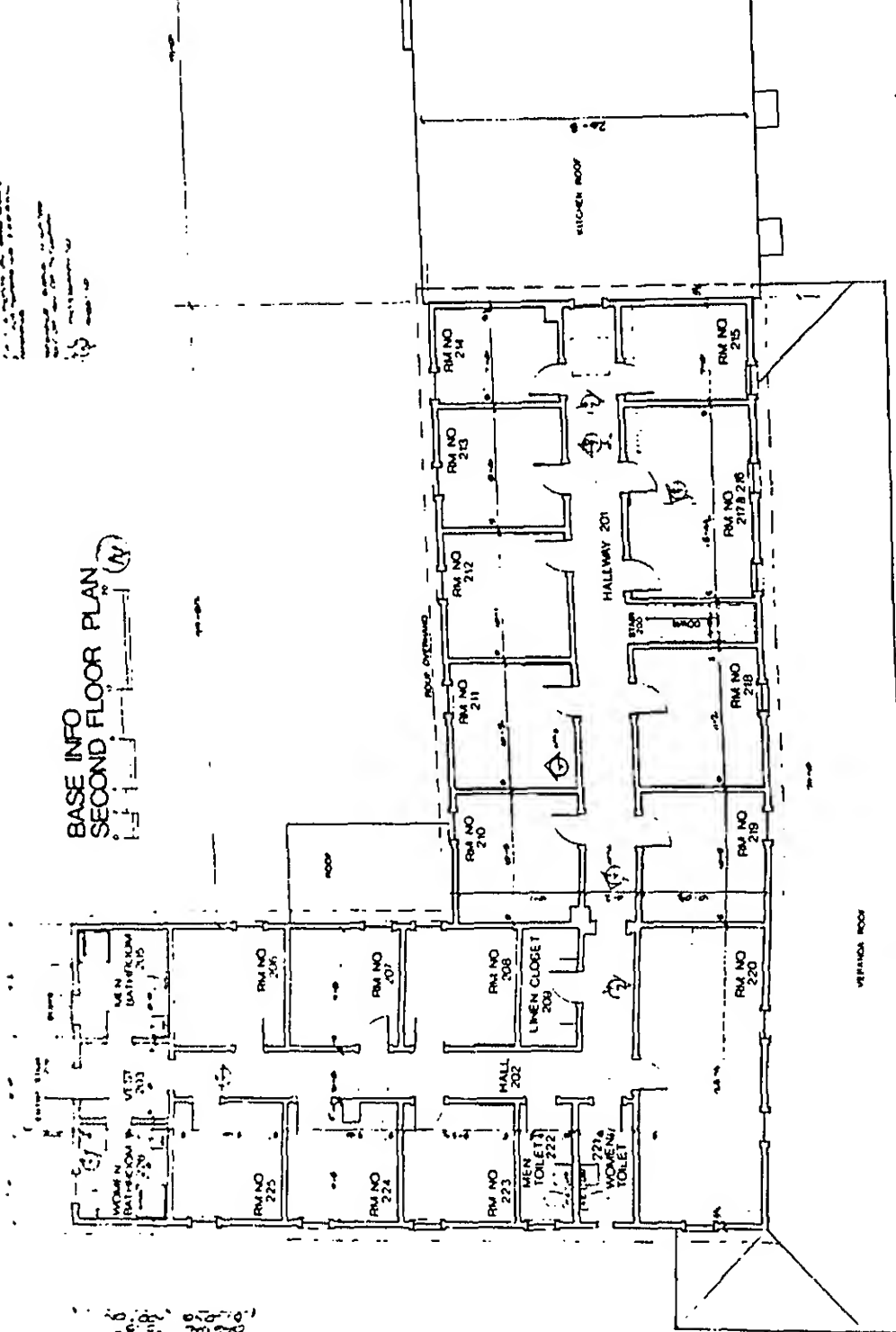
...when you walk in the hotel...to the left you go toward the bar; to the right there is a half wall with a screen and a dining area. At one time that was just all porch where people could sit, but... they always wanted to be down near the bar end of it. They needed more room for serving people, so they made [the east] part of it into a dining room.²

The east end of the porch before the division appears in 1942 and 1961 photographs (figs. 3 and 4) when it was still used as a place to sit and talk. The later dining function is illustrated in a 1986 photograph (fig. 6). The west half of the porch appears in photographs taken in 1961 and 1986 (figs. 4 and 5). In postcard photographs from the 1960s and 1970s (not illustrated) and 1977 photographs in the "Historic Structure Report," vines, probably Virginia creeper, covered the porch.

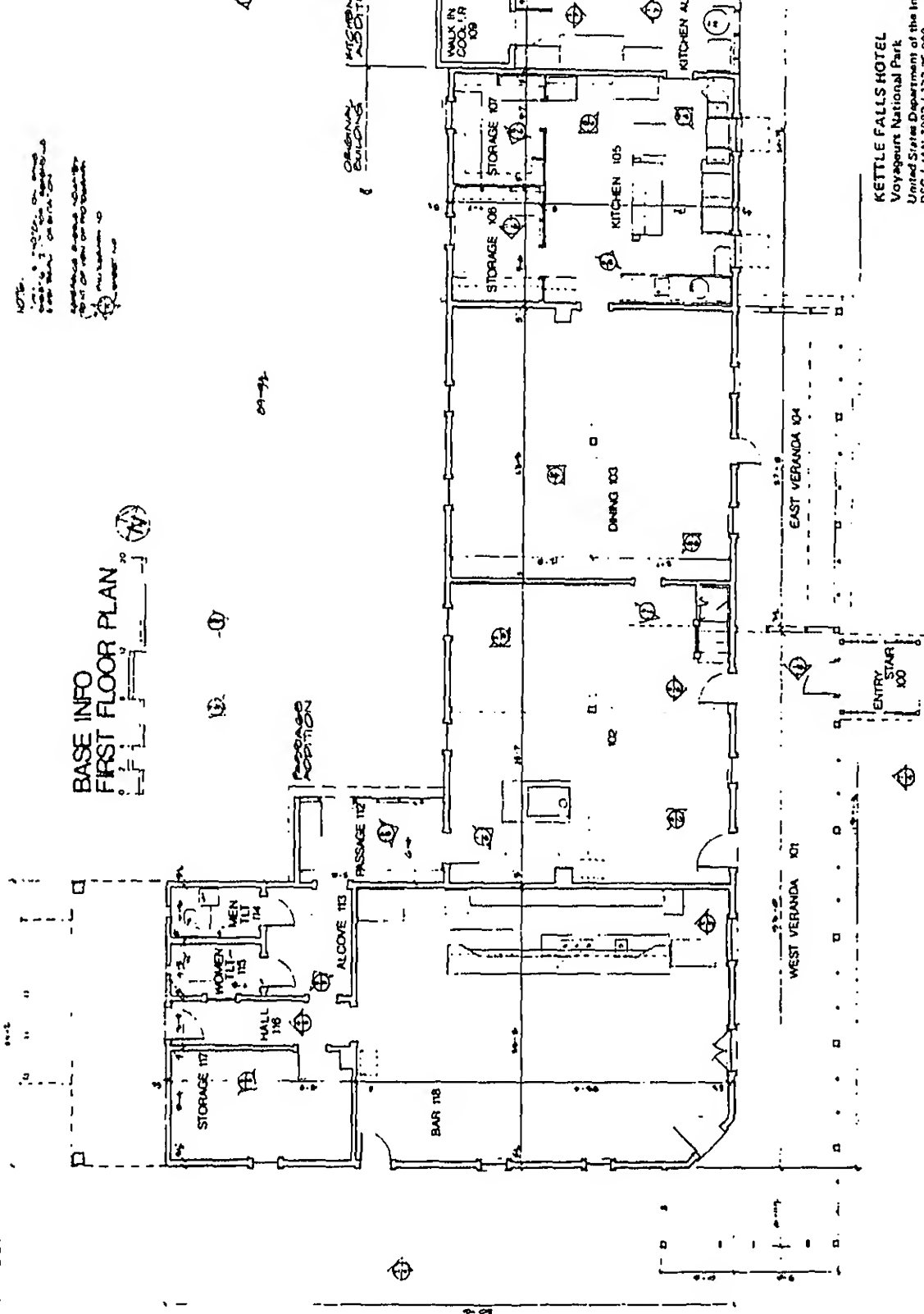
1. They are uncovered in the "1935 Tourist Edition" of the International Falls Daily Journal and covered in the "1938 Tourist Edition."

2. June Dougherty, interview, 1978, p. 21.

BASE INFO
SECOND FLOOR PLAN (A)



BASE INFO
FIRST FLOOR PLAN



Finishes. As far back as anyone remembers, the walls, ceiling, and trim were painted white, the floor was gray.⁴

Furnishings. In 1942 (fig. 3) the east end of the porch was furnished with mission-style armchairs, including a rocker, and at least a few rustic chairs. A shelf on the wall held three unidentifiable plain earthenware pots. A strip of matting 3 or 4 feet wide partially covered the floor down the center. A striped awning, inside the screen, was probably discarded later when vines provided plenty of shade.⁵

In a photograph taken about 1961 (fig. 4) at least two wicker armchairs can be seen, but the photograph is too dark to make out other pieces of porch furniture.⁶ A small, hand-lettered sign, with an arrow pointing to the "Bar Room" is on the wall to the right of the lobby door. An unidentifiable small poster hangs on the wall next to it.

A photograph from 1986 (fig. 6) shows the east porch furnished with a dining area, with two square and one round table and 15 or 16 as

3. Postcards, undated, Kettle Falls Hotel collection; HSR, pp. 14; June Dougherty, interview, 1978, p. 21.

4. June Dougherty, interview, 1978, p. 22; Charlie Williams, interview, July 10, 1987.

5. None of these pieces appear to be among the surviving Kettle Falls Hotel furnishings, owned by the concessioner.

6. The two wicker chairs, or ones very like them, have survived; see Inventory, Section II.

The west end of the porch in 1977 and in 1986 (fig. 5) was furnished with a mixture of old and new chairs in rustic wood, wicker, leather (or vinyl), and steel-and-plastic. A large rustic armchair with the name Olaf carved into the crest rail harks back to the 1920s or 1930s when "Big Olie" was a bartender in Williams' Night Club in Ranier.⁸ Two wicker chairs and a wicker settee, painted two shades of green, probably date from the same period. The leather or vinyl overstuffed chairs and sofa could date from the 1950s while the steel and plastic chairs were probably acquired in the 1960s or early 1970s.⁹ As June Dougherty put it in 1978:

They have wicker chairs out there, but some of them have fallen apart through the years but they have been there as long as I can remember. There is some new furniture out there. But you have people using furniture, it wears.

She remembered particularly a wicker couch that was later thrown out and burned.¹⁰

On the wall between the barroom windows there was a modern public telephone, in a simulated cut-away barrel, and a collection of old logging tools. As at the east end of the porch, there were two overhead light fixtures with suspended diffusers. The floor was bare.¹¹

7. The furniture is in the Kettle Falls collection. The overhead light fixtures were discarded when the hotel was undergoing renovation in 1986.

8. Concessioner's collection; family interview, 1987; HSR, p. 14.

9. All in the concessioner's collection.

10. June Dougherty, interview, 1978, p. 22; family interview, 1987.

11. The old logging tools are in the concessioner's collection; the overhead lights were discarded in 1986; the telephone booth's disposition is not known.

steps onto the porch. Here he would sign the guest register for his room and meals, then head up the stairs in the south to his assigned bedroom.

The lobby's other function (reflected in its alternate name) was to serve as a pre- and post-mealtime (or rainy day) gathering where guests could talk, sing around the upright piano, play records on the old Victrola, watch television (from the early days), or play cards.¹

The lobby afforded direct access to the dining room and barroom, which could be reached only by going out on the porch through a covered passage (a later addition to the building) on the north side of the lobby.

Finishes. Walls and ceiling were painted off-white or light pale green, and finally pale yellow. Woodwork was varnished but later painted to match the walls. It is not known what changes occurred.²

Utilities. As far as the family knows, the lobby was always heated by a free-standing, wood-burning barrel stove. It stood on a platform in the northwest quadrant of the room, with a stovepipe that ran north across to the chimney on the west wall, about four feet above the ceiling. Around 1970 a gas heating unit was installed, suspended from the ceiling just south of the chimney (fig. 8). The barrel stove has not been used occasionally even after 1970.

1. June Dougherty, interview, 1978, p. 21; figures 7-12.

2. HSR, pp. 104-105, 189.

The stove was later disconnected (fig. 9).³

Overhead lights before 1956 were probably naked bulbs, as in the barroom (fig. 20), but from about 1956, when the downstairs was rewired, until 1986, the lobby had four canopy-type, single-lamp, incandescent fixtures mounted on the exposed beams, with bowl-like diffusers hung by three bead chains.⁴

Furnishings. Coming into the lobby from the porch (the east door was regularly used) the visitor was immediately confronted by the registration desk (fig. 10).

The desk in the lobby has been there in the hotel as long as I [Blanche] can remember, and the first year I came up there was in 1932.... That desk had opened up and had a bedspring of some sort in it, not a coil spring, and an old mattress and that had been used as a bed. You can open it up but there's nothing there now -- the springs are gone.

Charlie Williams says that this was used as a "hideaway bed" in the Williams home near Ranier before it was brought out to the hotel.⁵

On the desk was the guest register of the moment, the latest in a series of varying styles and sizes. All of these appear to have survived,

3. Blanche Williams, interview, 1982, p. 24; June Dougherty, interview, 1978, p. 8; HSR, illustration p. 13 ("Living Room"). This stove is in storage at Kettle Falls.

4. HSR, p. 60. These fixtures were discarded when the hotel was renovated in 1986.

5. Blanche Williams, interview, p. 24; family interview, 1987.

many men had declined to record and later visitors have turned the pages of the old register binding finally gave out and was replaced in similar style.

Another object of long use in the lobby was an old wind bearing a manufacturer's label dated 1917. It still (1987) has a few 78 rpm popular records from the 1940s or 1950s. The V in 1986, on the west wall near the back door (fig. 9).⁷

On the north wall, between the back door and the window (fig. 8) is a turn-of-the-century upright piano, which originally belonged to Williams' sister in Ladysmith, Wisconsin. Later it was used at Lil's home near Rainier. They brought it out to the hotel according to Blanche Williams. No sheet music seems to be left but a 1942 piano instruction book suggests that at least Williams children practiced piano here during the summer.⁸

The other clearly old object in the lobby was the barrel organ discussed above.

6. Jay Griggs, "No Roads Lead to Kettle Falls," Daily Journal, Kettle Falls, Minnesota, c.1976 (copy, Voyageurs National Park, Kimball, "Historic Hotel in Kettle Falls Is Still Lively," Tribune, January 26, 1969. All the guest registers are copies of a session of the concessioner. The first register has been replaced in same style as the original covers.

7. Concessioner's collection, Kettle Falls.

8. Family interview, 1987. The piano is owned by the family. In July 1987 it was undergoing restoration in Minneapolis. Instruction booklets are in the concessioner's collection.

round, oak, pedestal tables, similar to those used in the dining room two wash bowl and pitcher sets; and an old Singer sewing machine.

Other pieces in the room in 1986 appear to date from after 1945. One of the couches (fig. 10), for instance, was identified by Blanche Williams in 1982 as one she had bought for her own home in 1948; she later brought it out to Kettle Falls and threw a cover over it to hide its worn upholstery. Others of similar or later vintage include a leather or vinyl upholstered couch and two chairs, several maple windsor chairs, one steel and plastic chair, a floor lamp, and a TV set and stand (figs 8, 10-11).¹⁰

All four walls were rather haphazardly decorated with about 10 pictures: 4 maps of the area, an old mirror, a black bear skin, a stuffed snow goose with wings outstretched, a Finnish sauna dipper, a birch bark basket and miniature canoe (on top of the piano), and a blue enameled water pitcher (on top of the Victrola). Most of these items date from after 1950, but the walls probably were similarly decorated in earlier years.¹¹

The row of coat hooks on the east wall (fig. 10) presumably were for the use of dining room guests.

June Dougherty said that both the lobby and dining room floors were covered with linoleum in the mid-fifties.

9. See figures 8-12. All of these pieces are in the concessioner's collection at Kettle Falls.

10. Blanche Williams, interview, 1982, p. 23; figures 8-12.

11. Figures 7-12. The bear skin (dating from 1965) and snow geese (1974) are owned by Mike Williams; the other pieces are in the concessioner's collection at Kettle Falls.

Reading material for guests in the 1950s and later included the day Evening Post, Life, and the National Geographic. A table with magazine is just visible behind the draped couch in figure 8.¹³

A number of hand-lettered or printed signs near the registration added to the homey character of the lobby. These signs informed visitors of dining room hours and prices and warned that no animals were allowed in the hotel and that only guests were allowed upstairs.

To summarize, the lobby in late years, and presumably in earlier years as well, was furnished with sturdy, practical pieces to serve its registration and lounge functions. As each piece wore out it was replaced often with something discarded from the owners' own home. The result was a mixture of styles and materials spanning several decades. Pictures and objects around the fringes of the room probably changed annually and reflected current interests rather than any decorative plan. It was a room in which tired fishermen could relax at the end of a long day in a comfortable informal setting.

12. June Dougherty, interview, 1978, pp. 7-8.

13. Family interview, 1987. A magazine rack in the concession house at Kettle Falls may also have been in the hotel lobby at one time.

14. Figure 10; Pearson and Ackerman, "Kettle Falls Hotel," p. 10.

not staying at the hotel could have a meal in the dining room between noon and 5:00 p.m. Packed lunches were also available for hotel guests planning to fish all day. At its peak in the 1950s and 1960s, the hotel served Sunday dinner to as many as 190 people.¹

The Menu. Breakfast usually was served about 6:30. "Sometimes we started earlier," says Blanche Williams, "if we had it ready and they were sitting around waiting; well, you might as well get them off your hands." The breakfast menu offered scrambled or fried eggs, bacon, pancakes or french toast, syrup, jam and jelly, juice, and homemade bread. "If you were there just for two nights, you would have the same breakfast, or even for three days," according to June Dougherty, "but if you were there for longer, you would have your bacon, juice and french toast made from homemade bread one morning."²

For long-term hotel guests, "noon lunch was lighter than the evening meal," usually homemade pea soup made with a ham bone or vegetable soup or chili, with crackers or "a certain kind of Thuringer."

For lunch on Saturday...usually in warm weather it would be ham, potato salad, baked beans, homemade bread, some kind of dessert, sometimes a rice pudding or bread pudding or something on that order. If it was a cold day mother and grandma would have ham, au gratin potatoes, and always the beans with it...and some kind of a relish tray and your dessert.³

1. Blanche Williams, interview, 1982, pp. 6, 8, 28; June Dougherty, interview, 1978, pp. 13-15. A sign showing dining room hours hung in the lobby next to the dining room door (fig. 10).

2. Blanche Williams, interview, 1982, pp. 5-6, 28; June Dougherty, interview, 1978, pp. 12-13, 15.

3. June Dougherty, interview, pp. 13-14.

We never used to serve sandwiches. Grandma Lil always used to say, "If they're hungry they'll eat a meal." She really got mad if anyone wanted a sandwich. I wanted to do as she had done because I thought she was successful. But we finally had to start serving hamburgers.⁴

Packed lunches -- "sandwiches...cookies or something" -- were provided for those who wanted to stay out fishing all day, although people seemed "to prefer coming in and wondering what are they going to have for lunch," according to June Dougherty.⁵

The dinner menu regularly offered three basic entrees in rotation: fish, beef, and chicken.

If someone came up for a weekend, to stay...on Friday, they would try to have walleye pike for your Friday night dinner; if they didn't have the pike it might be roast beef, and if it was a roast beef dinner you would have mashed potatoes and a tossed salad and some kind of a vegetable and always a homemade dessert of some kind, pie quite often, in the past pineapple upside-down cake.... These later years, the desserts haven't been as elaborate as they were....

...If you had the walleye on Friday night you would have the chicken on Saturday night, with the french fries,... cottage cheese and cole slaw and pie or cake or something.... Then Sunday noon sometimes turkey. If you had chicken though [on Saturday] you wouldn't have turkey on Sunday; you wouldn't have a fowl two days in a row. If you had fish Friday,... chicken Saturday night, you might have roast beef on Sunday noon.⁶

4. Flanche Williams, interview, p. 29.

5. Ibid., p. 6; June Dougherty, 1978, interview, p. 14.

6. June Dougherty, interview, 1978, pp. 12-13.

Only in very recent years were dinner patrons offered a choice of entrees. A 1983 menu, for instance, listed walleye, white fish, shrimp T-bone steak, chicken, and "special of the day," all broiled or fried.

Finishes. Originally the walls and ceiling were painted an off-white or light tan; this was changed to pale yellow at an unknown date. The woodwork was originally stained and varnished, later painted the wall color.⁹

Utilities. Originally there was a chimney at the east end of the hotel (fig. 2), which ran up the east wall of the dining room, but this appears to have been closed off before 1942 (fig. 2). The chimney breast remained in the dining room but there is no evidence that it served a heating stove within living memory.

Before the building was dismantled in 1986, the dining room was lighted by four 2-lamp, incandescent, canopy-type fixtures with square glass diffusers (fig. 13). These presumably dated from about 1956 when the downstairs was rewired. Earlier lighting probably consisted of four naked bulbs in porcelain lampholders.¹⁰

7. Blanche Williams, interview, 1982, p. 7.

8. Menu in Kettle Falls collection (copy, Voyageurs National Park).

9. HSR, pp. 104-105, 189.

10. HSR, p. 60.

the old one to Kettle Falls." Some tables also had a
lite, a pressed wood material produced in International

A special shelf, with a hole in the center, fitted around
the center of the room, which supports the main beam
table, set a little higher than in 1986, held a pail
water, which was ladled into water glasses.¹²

The dining room chairs in early years were wooden
styles. These gradually fell apart and by the 1970s
with a set of steel and yellow vinyl restaurant chairs.
Surviving oak or maple chairs of at least three designs
used in the porch dining area in 1986 (fig. 6); all three
pre-date the 1950s.¹³

There were two buffets (figs. 13, 15). The smaller
right of the kitchen door; it was brought out from the
farm in the 1920s. A larger buffet, probably dating from
brought to the hotel later and stood between the north

11. June Dougherty, interview, p. 7; HSR, illustrations
of these tables are in the concessioner's collection.

12. Family interview, 1987. This table is in the Kettle
Falls collection.

13. These chairs and the later ones are in the Kettle
Falls collection.

14. Family interview, 1987. The smaller buffet
is in the concessioner's collection at Kettle Falls. The location of
the larger buffet is not recorded.

photograph of Bob Williams in a boat, and a very recent color print of voyageurs in a loaded canoe. Of particular interest were visitors' crayon drawings and paintings of the hotel about which June Dougherty said in 1978:

A lot of people painted or drew pictures of Kettle Falls and would give them to my grandmother or my parents. They always hung them.... A little boy [Jan Bach of Forrest, Illinois] did a crayon drawing of the hotel when he was probably ten or eleven. When he became a young man [about 1957/1958], he did another one that is beautiful and the contrast was fun to see, but someone got rid of that picture.¹⁵

As in the lobby and barroom, pictures on the walls probably were replaced frequently to make room for new acquisitions.

In the 1930s, when Norman Selsaas was working at the hotel, a mangle stood in the northeast corner of the dining room.

...their girls would mangle all the sheets and that. They would press and fold the sheets. That was all done right in the dining room. [The mangle operated] with a big crank and elbow grease.

Later the mangle was in the back porch/laundry area. This "Garland" mangle, made by Lovell Manufacturing Company, Erie, Pennsylvania, is still in the Kettle Falls collection. Sometime after 1960 a regular visitor, Harry Hafe of Milwaukee, gave Mrs. Williams an electric mangle, and the old one was put back in the lobby as decoration.¹⁶

15. June Dougherty, interview, 1978, pp. 7-8. The earlier drawing disappeared in the 1960s.

16. Norman Selsaas, interview; family interview, 1987; family comments on draft report.

The earliest floor covering was linoleum, replaced by carpeting in 1960 for ease of maintenance.¹⁸

Red and white checked tablecloths were on the dining tables and mat runners on the buffets in the last decade (figs. 13, 15). Early white linen cloths with clear plastic covers were used.¹⁹

The dining room china, stored in the pantry, was typical, heavy semi-vitreous restaurant ware. Parts of two sets survive. The early green-rimmed white ware came from the Buffalo Pottery; a later, brown ware is marked Syracuse EconoRim.²⁰

18. June Dougherty, interview, p. 7; family comments on draft report.

19. Ibid., p. 8.

20. Family comments on draft report.

21. Concessioner's collection, Kettle Falls.

room may have been the kitchen.¹ Construction of the permanent kitchen must have followed very quickly, however, certainly before 1910 (fig. 1). The kitchen changed relatively little until 1956 when a refrigerator was introduced, the back porch became an "auxiliary kitchen," a refrigerator and walk-in cooler replaced the old ice boxes. Meat was cooked on a wood stove until a gas stove was installed in 1969. Dishes were washed by hand until 1970 when a restaurant dishwasher was required. A major remodelling of the two kitchens took place in 1986/87, and a new kitchen was built in 1986/87.²

Mrs. Dougherty has described how wonderful it was to walk in the kitchen in Grandma Lil's time:

...we would come in and there would be the chicken cooking away and their french fries -- they always used fresh potatoes, peeled every day or every other day. They used to peel them by hand, now they have an automatic peeler, but you still have to cut them. ...and I remember fresh yellow wax beans and cottage cheese. My grandmother always served cottage cheese and it would be the large curd; the small wasn't any good she said....and then it was cole slaw...just finely chopped cabbage and then sugar and vinegar on it mixed in certain proportions....

And so it would be the cole slaw, the chicken, and then blueberry pie. Always homemade desserts at Kettle Falls.... And then if you didn't have

1. The top of this chimney can be seen at the east end of the house in figure 2 (c.1920) and in a photograph in the "1938 Tourist Edition" of the International Falls Daily Journal, p. 24, but by 1942 (fig. 3) the upper part of this chimney appears to have been removed. When the chimney was taken out of service is not known.

2. HSR, pp. 42-43, 57-58, and illustrations on p. 16.

her way. It's such good bread; you can make that same recipe at home and it isn't the same. I think it's that water from the spring.³

The kitchen was too small and crowded to be more than a single use area for preparing meals and washing up afterwards. The only exception seemed to have been a pre-breakfast gathering of hungry guests.

In the morning before breakfast there'd be men all over in the kitchen, sitting. She [Lil] didn't like that because so much talking made it hard for her to concentrate. Then when we took over I let them do as they pleased. There were a lot of men that would come out in the kitchen and sit and talk and have coffee until breakfast was ready.⁴

Lil was more tolerant later in the day, however.

The men, when she was there, after they got done eating, she told them, "Bring your dishes out to the kitchen," and a lot of those men would even help wash dishes.⁵

Utilities. Before the mid-1950s water had to be brought into the kitchen from the well outside and wood for the stove from the woodpile. "I had to keep all the kettles filled with water," Norman Selsaas recalled from the late 1930s, "so whenever they needed water I'd have to carry water, and also...you'd have to carry all the wood split for the wood stove."⁶ The wood stove provided all the heat needed on cool days.

3. June Dougherty, interview, 1978, pp. 10-11.

4. Blanche Williams, interview, 1982, p. 28.

5. Ibid.

6. Norman Selsaas, interview, 1978, p. 5.

outlasted its usefulness.

It was just falling apart.... In the last years we couldn't use the oven and we had another gas stove...out on the back porch and that's where I had to do the baking and put the chicken in there. It was kind of inconvenient because it wasn't right together.⁷

In 1969, the old wood stove was finally removed and dumped over the river bank at the end of International Dam and was later hauled away by the National Park Service. A new South Bend gas range took its place in the hotel kitchen, between the south windows. Blanche described the new range as "a nice big gas stove with a big, big grill on it."⁸ This stove served until the hotel closed for renovation in 1986. To the left (east) of the stove were three or four gas-powered deep-fryers, one in the southeast corner sitting on top of the former woodbox.⁹

There appear to have been three sinks in the main kitchen through the years, in the southwest corner.

In the beginning we had a galvanized kitchen sink. It was falling apart, so Charlie...had a friend.... made this stainless steel sink, and it fit against the [west] wall where the dishwasher is now today. It had two big compartments and it was really a beautiful sink. But we had to wash the dishes by hand.¹⁰

7. Blanche Williams, interview, 1982, p. 11.

8. Ibid.; family interview, 1987.

9. Mike Williams, sketch plan of kitchens, 1987.

10. Blanche Williams, interview, 1982, p. 10.

In the early days, through World War II, ice boxes were equipment. Ice cut in the winter was stored in an ice box in the front yard of the hotel. Blanche Williams had a refrigerator but it wasn't motorized--a long cooler--and five gallon cans of milk were kept packed in ice. The generator, probably gas-powered, was installed in the laundry as the kitchen wiring was modernized in 1956, an electric was acquired for the kitchen and a walk-in cooler was added to the back kitchen. Two or three freezers and a milk machine were added in 1969 for use in the auxiliary kitchen and laundry.¹²

For work tables they had a long table in the center of the room with shelves above for serving dishes, supported by two posts; a smaller table on the east wall; and "one or two wooden tables" on the north side.¹³

There was "an old gray cupboard" in the northwest corner of the dining room door. This cupboard, made for Bob and Blanche, held dishes used in the dining room.¹⁴

11. Ibid., pp. 27-28. The Faspray dishwasher is in the laundry room in Falls.

12. Blanche Williams, interview, 1978, p. 11; Norman S. Williams, interview, 1978, p. 7; HSR pp. 57-58.

13. Figure 22; Mike Williams, sketch plan, 1987; June Williams, interview, 1978, p. 6.

14. June Dougherty, interview, 1978, p. 8; Mike Williams, interview, 1978, p. 8.

Photographs from the 1950s to 1980s show every available bit of wall space filled with pots and pans, utensils, pot holders and so on (figs. 15-17). Cast iron frying pans and dutch ovens figure prominently in Blanche Williams' and June Dougherty's memories of Lil Williams' famous browned and steamed chicken.¹⁶ Mrs. Dougherty's account is particularly interesting, as it shows how cooking methods changed with the times at Kettle Falls.

Grandma Lil had her way of cooking chicken and through the years my mother cooked it the same way...where they used cast iron frying pans.... They used about an inch of grease or lard and then margarine for the browning. The chicken would be in quarters and dipped in well-salted flour and then browned in this grease and then put in cast iron dutch ovens--there would be a lid in the bottom with a little water put in and the chicken covered--and then finish cooking in the hot wood stove and now in the gas stove. Nobody has chicken like that any more. Oh, a number of years ago my mother decided to try the prepared chicken. Probably five years ago [about 1973].... They bought the cooker for that and the people that come to the hotel for chicken they seem to think its fine, but I don't like it and my husband says its terrible. This last summer [1977] I talked my sister-in-law into trying the old method that Grandma Lil used to do and my mother did years ago. I said let's try it just for the hotel guests; if it's too much monkey business we don't have to do it any more.... It was a success, and they do keep the other kind for a pinch, but Mary has gone back to the old method.

15. Architectural Resources, Inc., draft report on electrical systems, March 13, 1978 (copy, Voyageurs National Park).

16. Blanche Williams, interview, 1982, pp. 7-8; June Dougherty, interview, 1978, pp. 9-10.

...the pantry is the same, the dishes are in the same spot.... Last summer [1977] I went into the pantry and I said where's the old table, and they said, there was something wrong with it and it was at the dump. Well, my father was very upset and an order was given to retrieve it. It wasn't anything special, one of these porcelain top....¹⁷

Fresh loaves of bread were kept in a 20-gallon Red Wing crock on a homemade stool in the pantry.¹⁸

Telephone Room (107). Primarily a shelf-lined space for storage and other things needed in the kitchen, this little room off the east corner of the kitchen also housed, from 1971, the telephone.

Our first phone was from over in Canada, Bell Telephone of Canada. It was kind of funny. If it was working good, it was fine, but at times you could hear every conversation. It was a party line--eight parties or eight resorts.¹⁹

In 1981 a bear got into the kitchen through the window of this

Auxiliary Kitchen (108). Originally a screened back porch, this was converted into a back kitchen about 1956 (figs. 18, 19). It actually contained a sink on the east wall, a gas water heater

17. June Dougherty, interview, 1978, p. 8.

18. Family interview, 1987. The crock and stool are in the collector's collection, Kettle Falls.

19. Blanche Williams, interview, 1982, p. 25; Mike and Chuck Williams, interview, 1978, p. 13.

20. Blanche Williams, interview, 1982, p. 25.

the same wringer-type washer that was there in the 1950s, when Blanche Williams' sister Margaret used to come up weekends to do the wash. The wash dried on long clothes lines in front of the hotel.²³

In 1978 the laundry contained two washing machines, an electric mangle, freezer, and a toilet (111). The clothes dryers (2) were in the keeper's house.²⁴

Mike Williams, sketch plan, 1987; HSR, p. 104.

HSR, p. 187.

Norman Selsaas, interview, 1978, p. 7; Blanche Williams, interview, 1978, p. 12.

Architectural Resources, Inc., draft report on electrical system, 1987; Mike Williams, sketch plan, 1987; family comments on draft Historic Furnishings Report.

it, "made a good living."¹ In the early days barroom only from the front or side porch; there from the hotel. Probably since 1961, when the toilet a storeroom behind the barroom (114-115), a passage access to the barroom from the lobby. Another since the barroom remained unchanged.

Besides drinks and some food, the barroom featured entertainment. A nickelodeon installed in 1927 music; in the hotel's last years there was also a (38). As early as 1956/57, there was a "bumper pool table replaced it about 1970 (figs. 22, 31) games had found their way to the Kettle Falls Hotel.

Probably the most entertaining feature of the barroom was the wildly warped floor, the result of decades of floor damage from the freezing and thawing of the earth just under the

The most amazing part of the building is the floor -- good sound floors but nowhere level. You are always walking uphill, downhill or side-sloping at every point in the large bar-room the floor slopes toward the door. I guess if you roll out of a stool you make the climb back to a stool you've had

Fond memories of this aspect of what was dubbed "the warped floor" inspired the National Park Service to reproduce

1. Blanche Williams, interview, 1982, p. 29.

2. Family interview, 1987.

3. Kimball, "Historic Hotel," Minneapolis Tribune

a stovepipe and a low stove, probably a "bucket-a-day" potbelly stove (fig. 23). This stove was replaced before 1961 with an oil-burning heater (figs. 27, 31), which was in turn replaced in 1970 with a ceiling-mounted gas unit heater (fig. 38).⁵

Plumbing was probably first brought into the barroom about 1961, at the same time the toilets were installed in the adjacent storeroom, an icemaker was installed in 1969. In earlier times, water and ice were brought in by hand.

I used to get up at 5:30 every morning [recalled Norman Selsaas, a former employee] when everyone else was sleeping. I'd have to clean the bar room out, go get ice and ice the beer, and the pans where they wash, I'd have to drain all the water out by hand and put fresh water in the bar room....⁶

The barroom's lighting system from 1918 to 1956 consisted of low wattage, naked, incandescent bulbs in key-type sockets hung by a twisted drop cord from ceiling-mounted wiring (figs. 20, 23). Thereafter, the barroom had keyless porcelain lampholders mounted on the ceiling with "the new G shape incandescent lamp...to replace the old A line to be more decorative" (fig. 37). Bowl-shaped diffusers were added to the lights over the bar (fig. 36), possibly about 1973 when the ceiling fans were installed.⁷

4. The phrase "tiltin' Hilton" was used on a poster (post-1980) in the concessioner's collection.

5. HSR, p. 56.

6. Norman Selsaas, interview, 1978, p. 5; HSR, p. 43.

7. HSR, pp. 53-54, 57, and illustration p. 14; Architectural Resources, Inc., draft report on electrical system, 1978.

kerosene lamp. They were still available to be used when I worked up there in the '30s.⁸

June Dougherty recalled her mother's saying that the light "the heart of the place" because "when the light plant stops Falls, that's it."⁹ As late as 1986, there were at least two sene lanterns in the barroom (figs. 36, 38).

Electrically powered appliances in the barroom and storeroom included an icemaker, two refrigerators, three ceiling fans, cooler, and the nickelodeon and juke box.¹⁰

Furnishings. The bar visible along the east wall in the barroom (figs. 21-38) probably dates from the early 1930s and the Williams Night Club in Ranier.¹¹ It is of the simplest construction, mainly dark-stained plywood on a pine frame, with a maple countertop. There is no footrail. The back bar, also of plywood, has many drawers for storage, a deep counter, and a shelf ideal for display of pictures, cards, cartoons, and other

At least four sets of bar stools have been used. Before 1950 the soda fountain type, with twisted wire frames and wooden seats. The next style, used from the early 1950s to the mid-1960s, was chrome

8. Norman Selsaas, interview, 1978, p. 10.

9. June Dougherty, interview, 1978, p. 7.

10. Architectural Resources, Inc., draft report on electric lighting, 1978.

11. Family interview, 1987.

Along the west wall there were three booths, each consisting of two high-backed benches and a free-standing table (fig. 37). They were in the barroom in 1942 (fig. 20) and probably all the way back to the 1930s or even 1920s. Photographs from 1942 to 1961 (figs. 20, 23, 28) show wooden armchairs in use as supplemental seating at the tables. In the late 1960s (fig. 31) a steel and plastic dining room chair was being used. The bar tables were painted gray and covered with linoleum.¹³

Made by the J.P. Seeburg Piano Company of Chicago, the electrically-operated nickelodeon is said to have been one of a pair bought in 1922 by Bob Williams. One was for his night club in Ranier, the other for the Kettle Falls Hotel, where it was installed in 1927 according to family tradition.¹⁴ Originally powered by a 32-volt motor, it was refitted with a 110/120-volt motor in 1961 when the hotel power plant was upgraded. It always sat at the north end of the room between the side porch and storeroom doors.¹⁵

A club pool or bumper pool table was installed at the south end of the barroom about 1956 (fig. 22). It was replaced about 1969 by a larger,

12. Ibid.; see also figures 23, 26, 33, 36. Only the last stools are now in the concessioner's collection.

13. Family comments on draft report. None of these chairs appears to have survived, but four of the chair legs, with their distinctive trifid feet, seem to have been used for the pantry stool on which the bread crock sat (Kettle Falls Hotel collection):

14. Charlie Williams, family interview, 1987; Mike and Chuck Williams, interview, 1978, p. 11-12.

15. Mike and Chuck Williams, interview, 1978, p. 12; Norman Selsaas, interview, 1978, pp. 3, 11; figures 20, 31, 38. The nickelodeon, recently restored and in operating condition, is in the concessioner's collection at Kettle Falls.

As early as 1961, there was a Coca Cola cooler in the (fig. 27). By the early 1970s, a large cooler advert replaced it (fig. 34).

Like the lobby and dining room, the barroom was a veritable gallery of pictures, mounted fish and hunting trophies, posters, catch slogans, and in its last years, men's caps.

The oldest and most popular of these decorations were the ones known as "the girls," six color prints of nudes, probably from the 1930s or early 1940s (figs. 24, 34, 37, 38). "I grew up with them," said June Dougherty in 1978. "I grew up with them, they've always been there," said June Dougherty in 1978.

They were in bad shape, cracking and flaking, and when dad took them down, he was going to have them framed and it just wasn't the same without the girls. The girls were missing for a couple of years, then Ken Amick had them framed and they are all in their places. We wash the glass on them and people come in and comment on them and I tell them they had baths today.¹⁷

16. Family interview, 1987. The later pool table is in the concessioner's collection at Kettle Falls.

17. June Dougherty, interview, 1978, p. 19. These prints are in the concessioner's collection at Kettle Falls.

There were other, mostly now unidentifiable, prints and photographs on the walls, along with a mounted deer head, a set of moose antlers, a snow shoe, a Mexican hat, several mounted fish (dating from the 1970s), a large signed photograph of Jack Dempsey (1942), and at least two paintings of the Kettle Falls barroom done by visitors.¹⁹

The back bar was a whole gallery in itself, "lined with photographs dating back through the years that the hotel has been in existence, and Charlie knows the people," reported the Mesabi Sunday News in 1972, "woodmen and Indians in the older pictures, friends and hotel guests in the recent ones."²⁰ It was a constantly changing exhibit as many photographs testify (figs. 26, 29-36).

Both a roller shade and a pair of full length flowered drapes can be seen on one of the windows in a 1961 photograph (fig. 28). In 1986 there were cafe curtains on both west windows (fig. 37).

18. Concessioner's collection, Kettle Falls. One of these prints is clearly visible in figure 44, to the left of the reclining nude.

19. See figures 20-38. The fish, deer head, and one painting of the bar are in the concessioner's collection at Kettle Falls.

20. "Kettle Falls Hotel to Survive," Mesabi Sunday News, August 6, 1972.

Stairs and Upstairs Hall (200, 201, 202). The stairs to the first floor went up from the southeast corner of the lobby, between the entrance and the dining room door. The upstairs hall ran along the center of the east and north wings, ending (after 1965) in a small room at the north end between the two bathrooms, where an outside door led down to the rear of the hotel.

The hall was dimly lit with low voltage bulbs until the voltage was increased in 1961. The original base bulbs were replaced about 1974 with descent drum fixtures with opal glass diffusers."¹

Striped carpeting, similar to that in the bedrooms, was installed in the early 1970s. Before that time the hall floors were bare."²

Bedrooms. Before 1961 there were 18 bedrooms. In that year rooms 1 and 2 were converted into a pair of toilets and in 1973 rooms 3 and 5 were combined, leaving 16 rooms, of which 15 were available for guests.

The following evidence on the individual bedrooms is derived from an interview with June Dougherty in 1978. The rooms are listed with their historic numbers with the architect-assigned numbers in parentheses.

No. 1 (215). A "Little room" at the east end of the hall, between the entrance and the dining room. It contained a single bed.

No. 2 (214). Similar to No. 1, on the north side.

1. HSR, p. 60. Sherry Casey Stemm remembers going down to the basement at dusk to pull the light strings for the evening (family comment in the report).

2. HSR, p. 189 and illustration on p. 14; Mike Williams, draft of this report.

3. June Dougherty, interview, 1978, pp. 16-17; HSR, p. 9.

t commode and the old dresser.

. 5 (217). "...my grandmother's and grandfather's room and then after 1961] my parents' room. Mother needed more room for her book-keeping and so they took No. 3 out and made No. 5 a larger room where we could have a desk and file and typewriter and whatever; it's still crowded but it is a little larger." No. 5 was next to the stairs on the north side of the hall.

. 6 (212). A north-facing room with two twin beds.

. 7 (218). South side, next to the stairs. "...facing the lake, that was one of the favorite rooms, the people that are coming like for a week to that room or the ones that are there longer, or certain people request that room."

. 8 (211). A north room, "facing the back of the hotel," with two twin beds.

. 9 (219). Mrs. Dougherty did not mention this room, which may have been less desirable, despite its view of the lake, because of its proximity to No. 11, the "hospitality room."

. 10 (210). A north room, not mentioned by Mrs. Dougherty.

. 11 (220). Occupying the southwest corner, this was the largest bedroom in the hotel, containing four twin beds, "a huge old dresser" and two commodes. From the 1930s to the mid-1950s, Charlie and Blanche Williams and their children were in No. 11. At other times it was rented out.

party and it's really nice when you
ermen one weekend...because the fisher
to hear noise at night and you do
nickelodeon and all.

No. 12 (208). North wing, east side looking o
hotel.

That was Bill, my husband's and my
many years...mother always saved that
we would come in on weekends. Some
stay up during the week...if she n
happened to feel like it or if some
tomers or--they were like family real
so's coming...he's an old friend
mother's, you have to be here, she wou

"There isn't a room No. 13 because that is bad 1

No. 14 (207). North wing, east side. This
beds, later (after 1977) a "big iron bed" moved
dad got upset when they took the big iron bed o
and put it in [here], because Grandma Lil had it

No. 15 (221-222). "There is no No. 15 because
ladies' and a men's bathroom with a sink and
This change took place in 1961.

No. 16 (206). The last room on the right in t
twin beds.

No. 17 (223). On the west side, facing toward
one of the double beds until after 1977 when i

Furnishings. The bedrooms were very simply furnished, with one double or two single beds (four singles in No. 11), a dresser, a commode or washstand (two in No. 11), probably a chair or two, wall carpeting, and curtains. In place of closets, each room had a shelf for clothes hooks.⁴

At the time the hotel closed in 1986, the bedrooms contained a variety of beds including at least two iron double beds and twin beds in metal (fig. 41), wood and brass (fig. 39), and Hollywood-style (fig. 40).⁵

Each room contained a dresser, most with an attached mirror. Most of them were typical oak or mahogany veneered pieces dating back to the 1930s and earlier (figs. 40, 41). Many had been painted white but had been recently stripped and naturally finished. A rustic dresser with a mirror, made of cedar and birchbark, is attributed to a local carpenter, Al Fortner. Pieces of this type were used in the hotel bedrooms in its early days, according to Charlie Williams. Of this distinctive furniture only this dresser, a round table, and "Olaf's chair" seem to have survived in the concessioner's collection.⁶

Since there was no indoor plumbing before 1961, every bedroom was supplied with a commode, which held a white china bowl and pitcher.

4. June Dougherty, interview, 1978, pp. 16-17; figures 39-41.

5. Concessioner's collection, Kettle Falls.

6. Family interview, 1987.

Two of the original washbowl and pitcher sets (d
at Kettle Falls. They are of white semi-porce

An exterior photograph from about 1920 and se
illustrated) and figure 39 (1971) show what appe
in the south bedroom windows. In 1942 (fig. 2)
striped awnings. Flowered curtains are visible
(fig. 41). All windows had white window shades (

The only evidence on carpeting is a 1986 photo
shows wall-to-wall striped carpeting.

The original drop-cord lights stayed in place unt
in 1978 "the second floor lighting is generally
holders or pull chain lamp holders with bare bul
(fig. 40), however, shows a drum-type fixture with
owners' room.⁸

Bathrooms. When indoor plumbing was introduced in
converted into toilets for men and women, each
lavatory, and commode. Bathing facilities had

7. June Dougherty, interview, 1978, p. 6; Kimba
figure 48.

8. HSR, p. 60.

Linen Closet (209). This was at the inside corner where the east and north halls meet, adjacent to Room No. 12.¹⁰

9. HSR, p. 43 and illustration on p. 17; June Dougherty, interview, 1978, p. 17.

10. June Dougherty, interview, 1978, p. 16; HSR, p. 9.



I L L U S T R A T I O N S

Figure 1. Bartenders' picnic at Kettle Falls, 1915. The e
view of the hotel, shortly after it was completed. Note
painted porch and lean-to kitchen.

Collection of Koochiching County Historical Museum, Intern
Falls, MN.

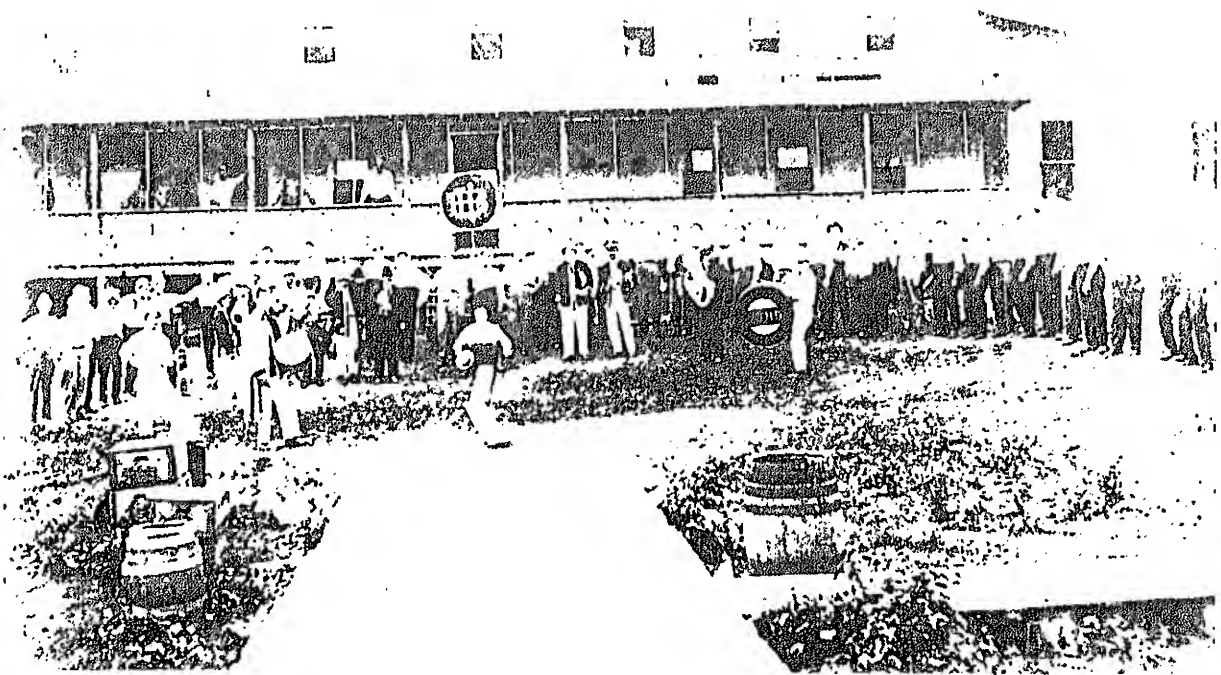


Figure 2. Kettle Falls Hotel, June 1942.

Collection of Norman Selsaas; copy negative, Voyage

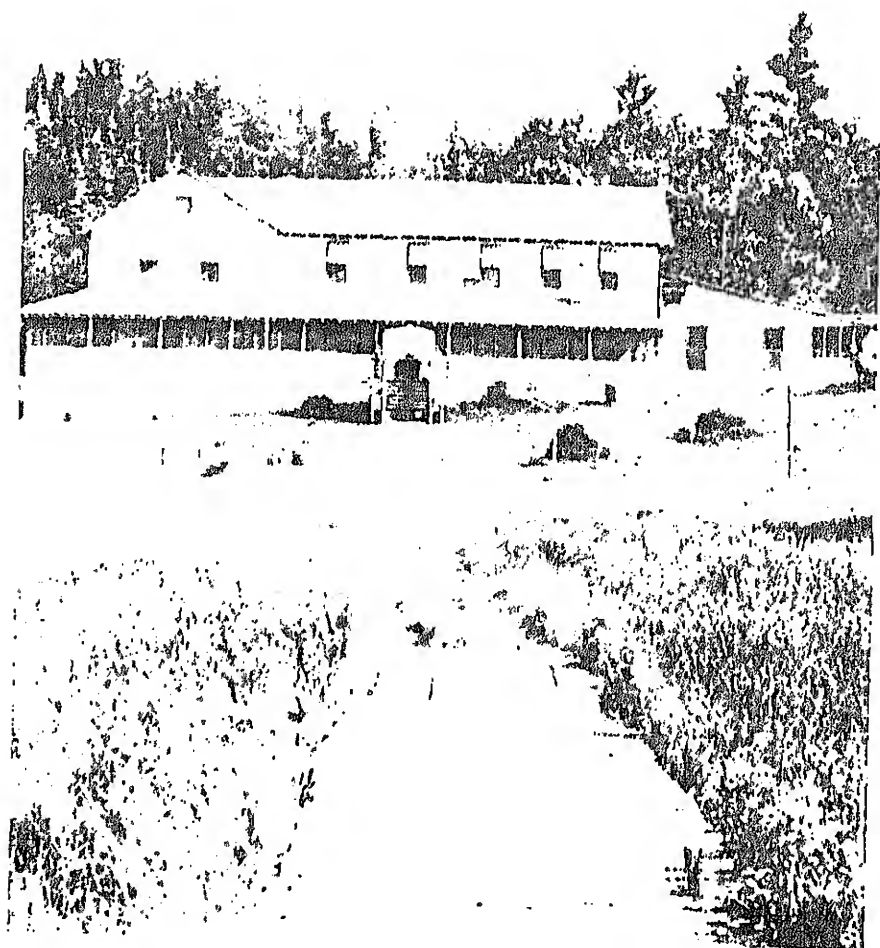


Figure 3. East end of porch, June 1942.

Collection of Norman Selsaas; copy negative, Voyageurs

Figure 4. Porch, looking west, c.1961.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Charles R. Williams;
Voyageurs National Park.

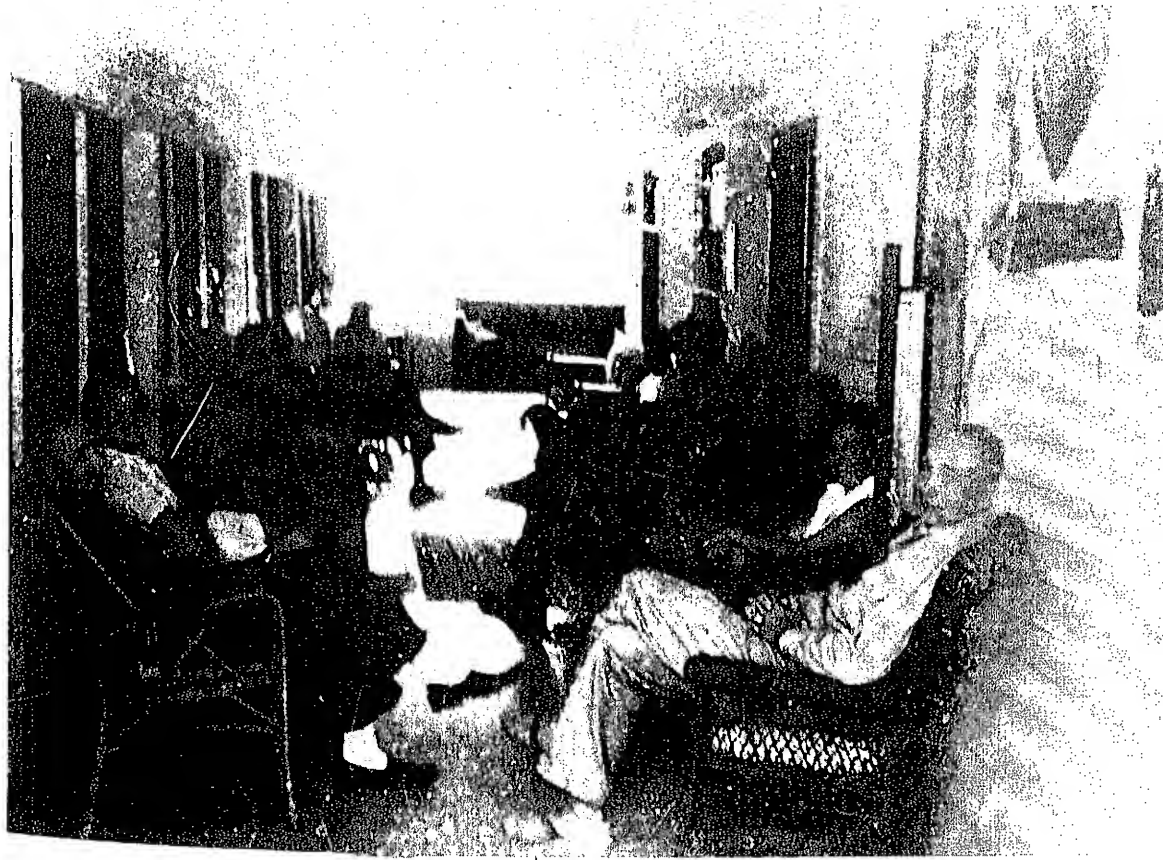
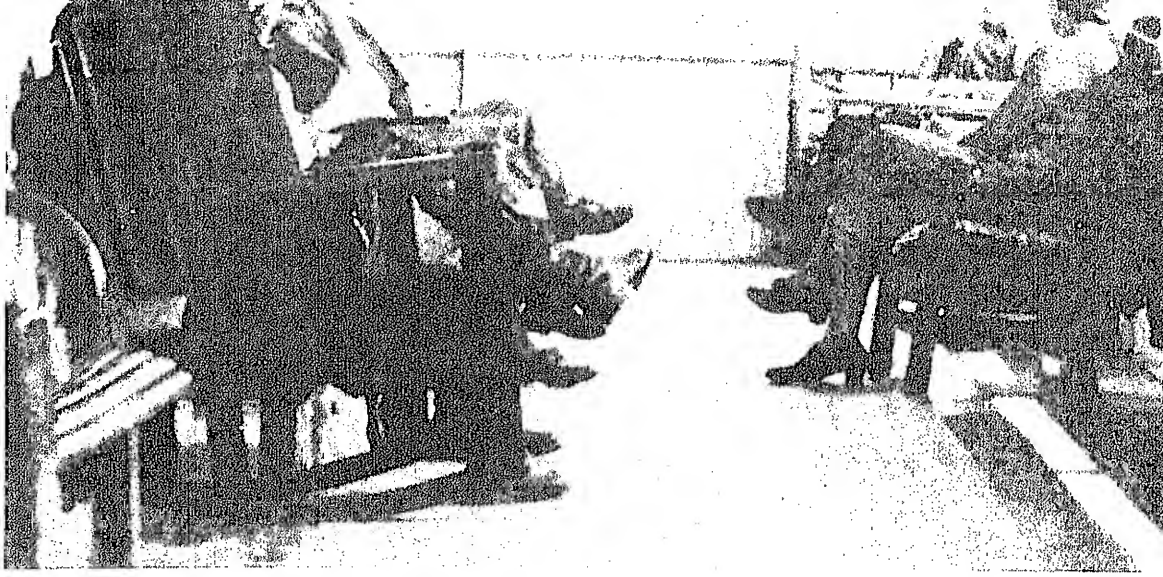


Figure 5. Porch, looking west, 1986.

Voyageurs National Park photograph.

Figure 6. Porch, dining area at east end, 1986.

Voyageurs National Park photograph.

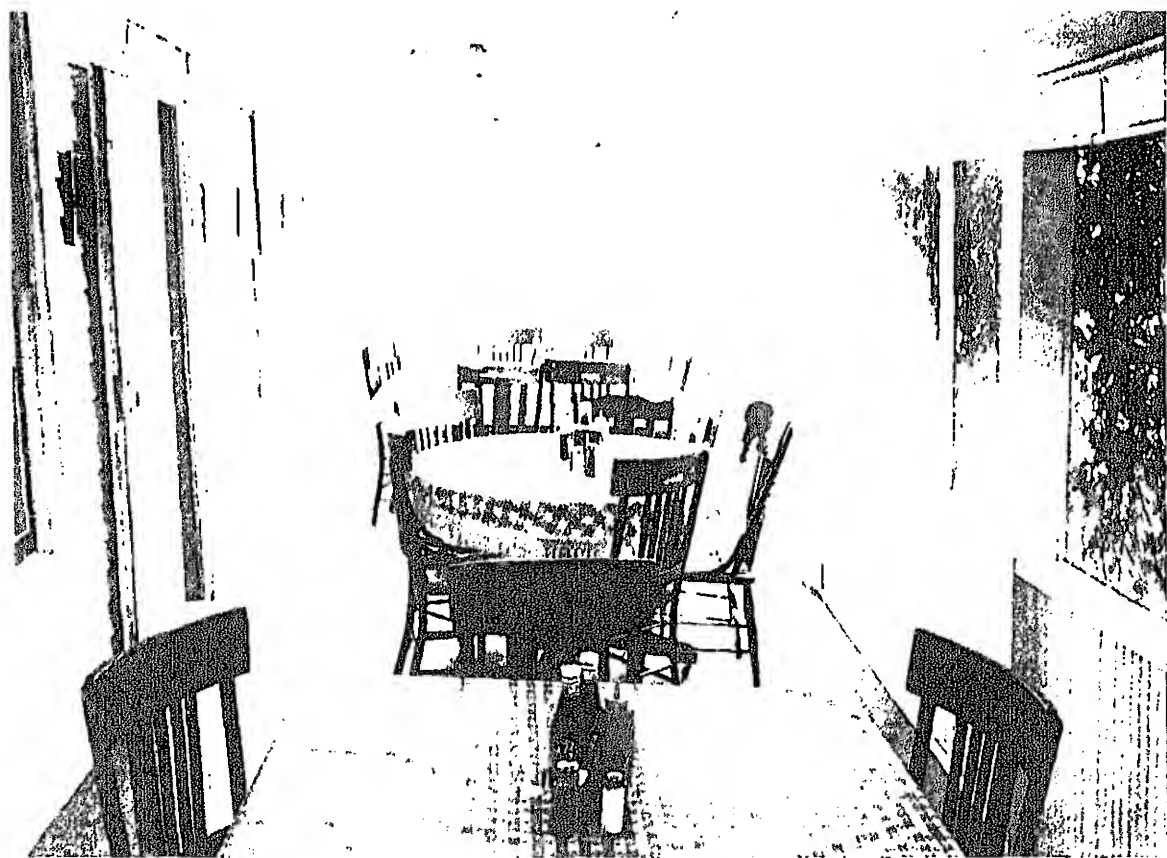
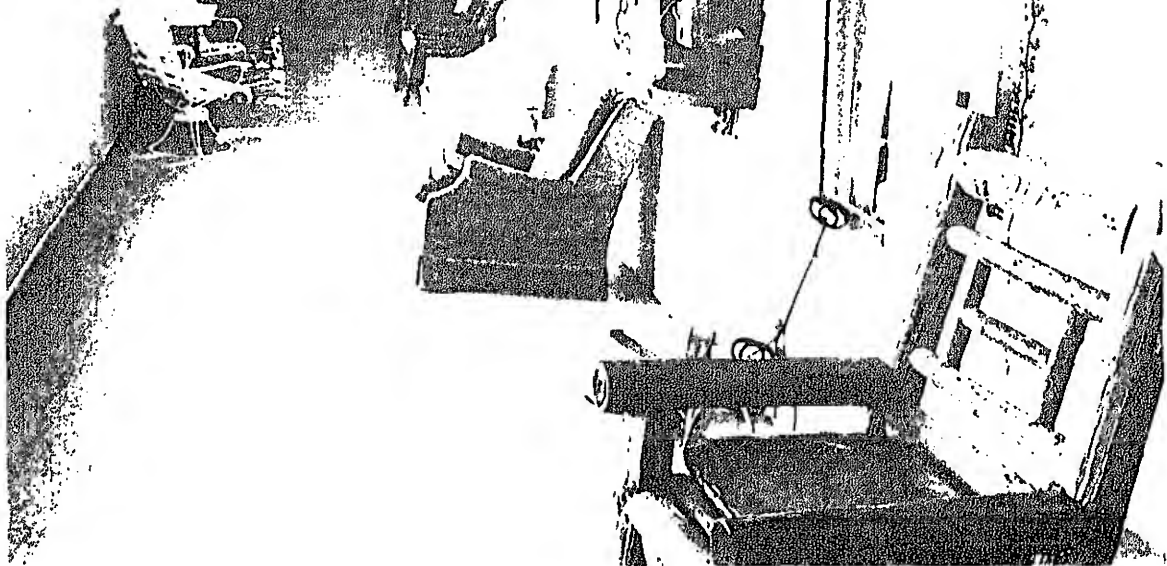


Figure 7. Lobby, looking south and east, c.1971.

Kent Kobersteen photograph, Minneapolis Tribune
March 14, 1971.



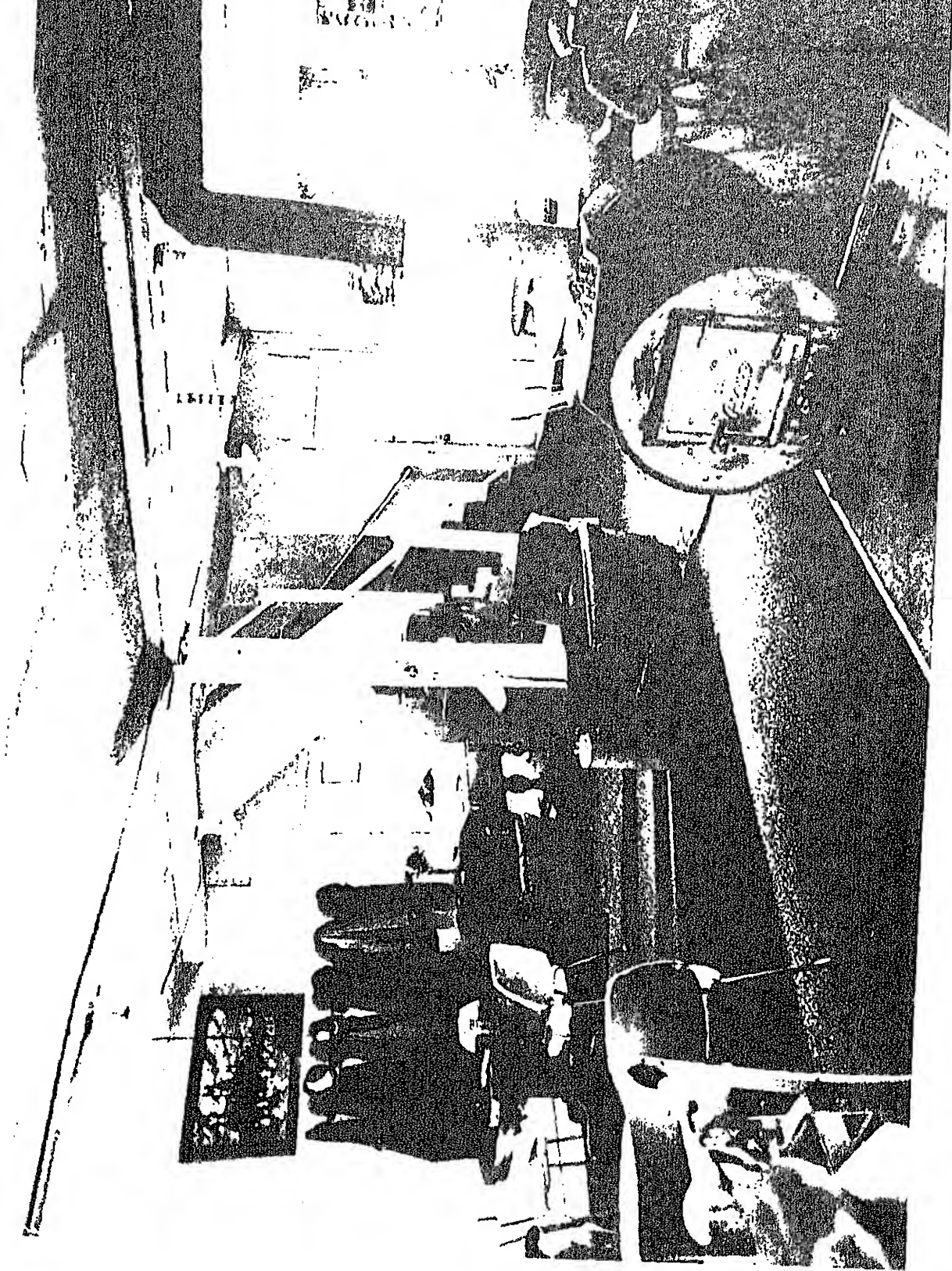


Figure 8. Lobby, looking west, 1986.

Voyageurs National Park photograph.

Figure 9. Lobby, looking northwest, 1986.

Voyageurs National Park photograph.

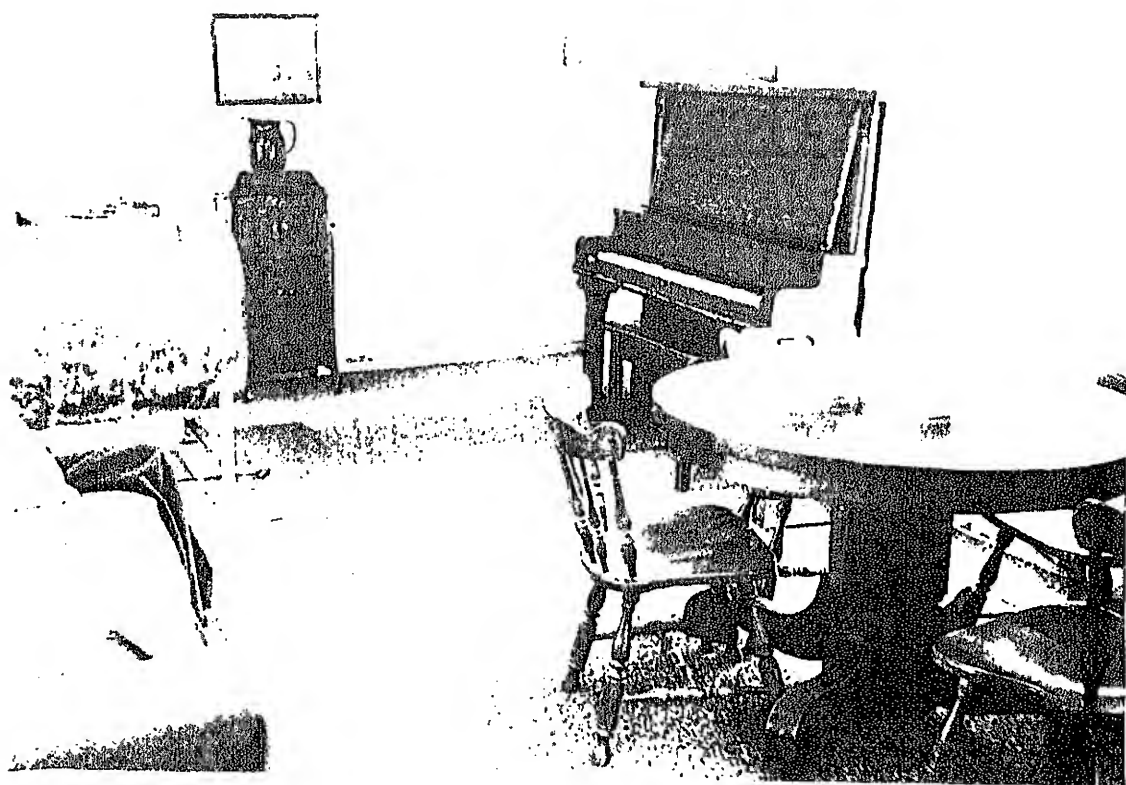
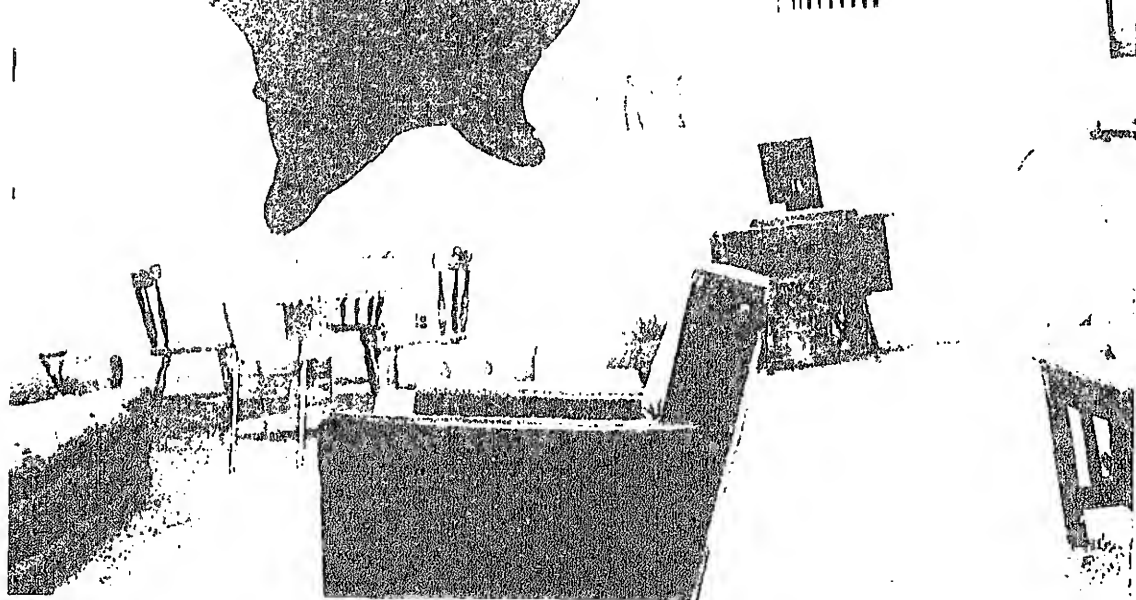


Figure 10. Lobby, looking northeast, 1986.

Voyageurs National Park photograph.

Figure 11. Lobby, looking southwest, 1986.

Voyageurs National Park photograph.

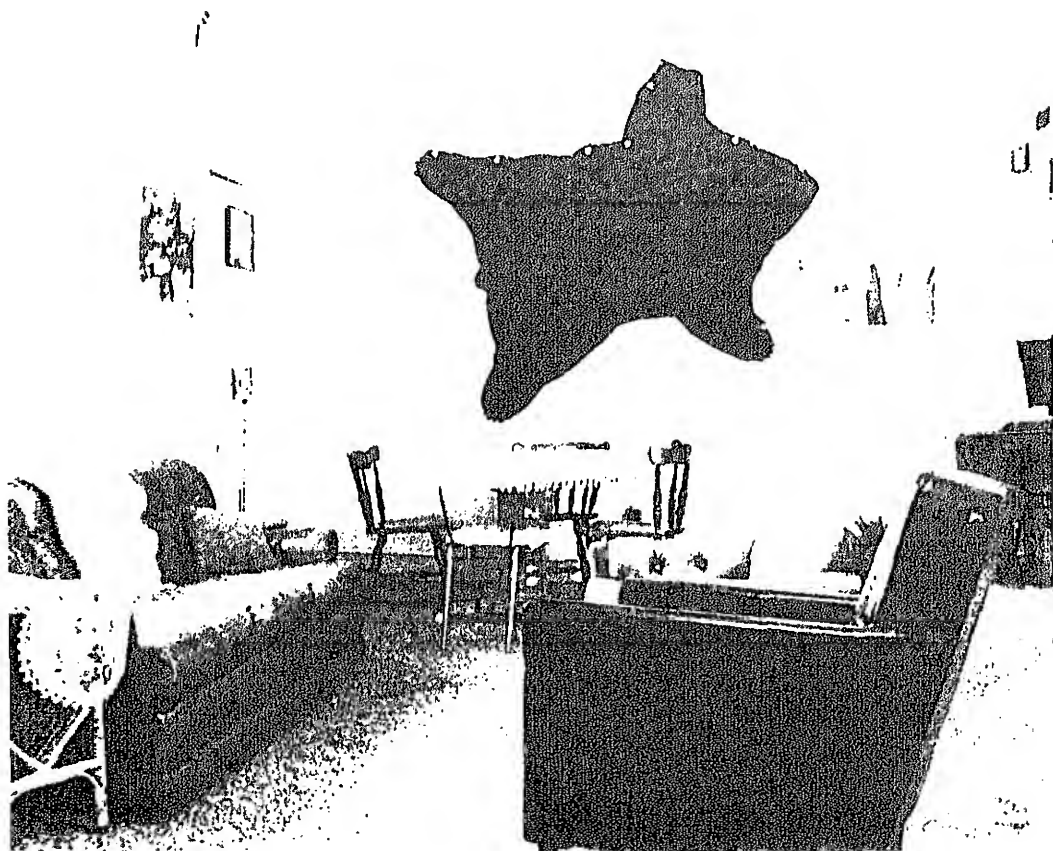
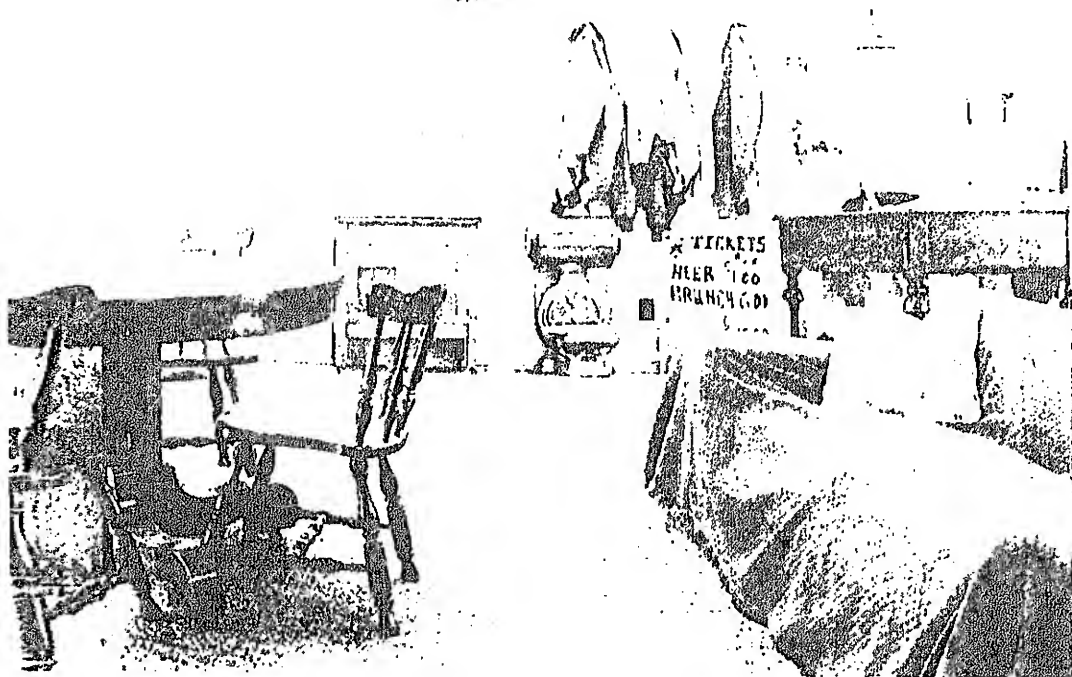


Figure 12. Lobby, southwest corner, 1980

Voyageurs National Park photograph.

Figure 13. Dining room, looking southeast

Postcard, Voyageurs National Park.



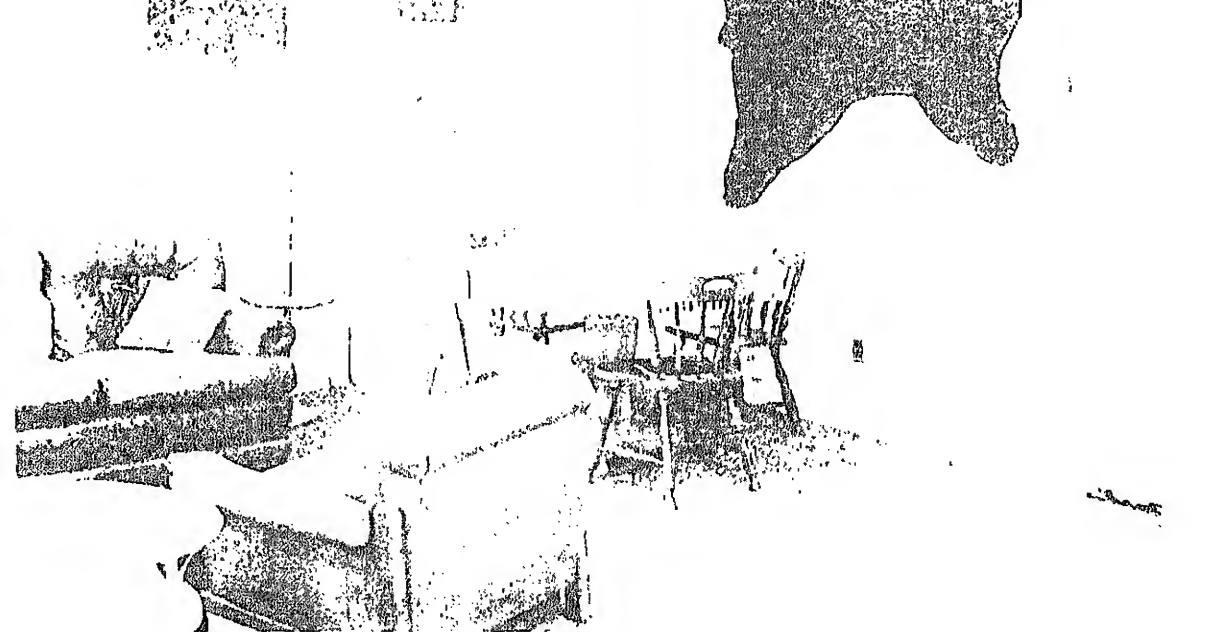


Figure 14. Dining room, looking northeast, 1986.

Voyageurs National Park photograph.

Figure 15. Lil Williams in the kitchen, 1958.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Charles R. Williams;
Voyageurs National Park.

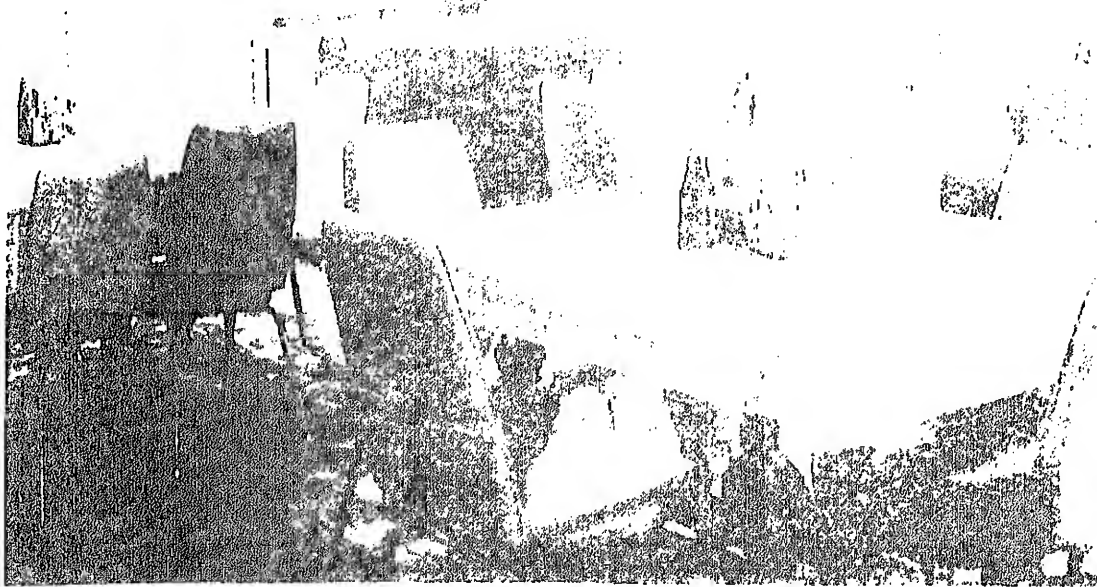
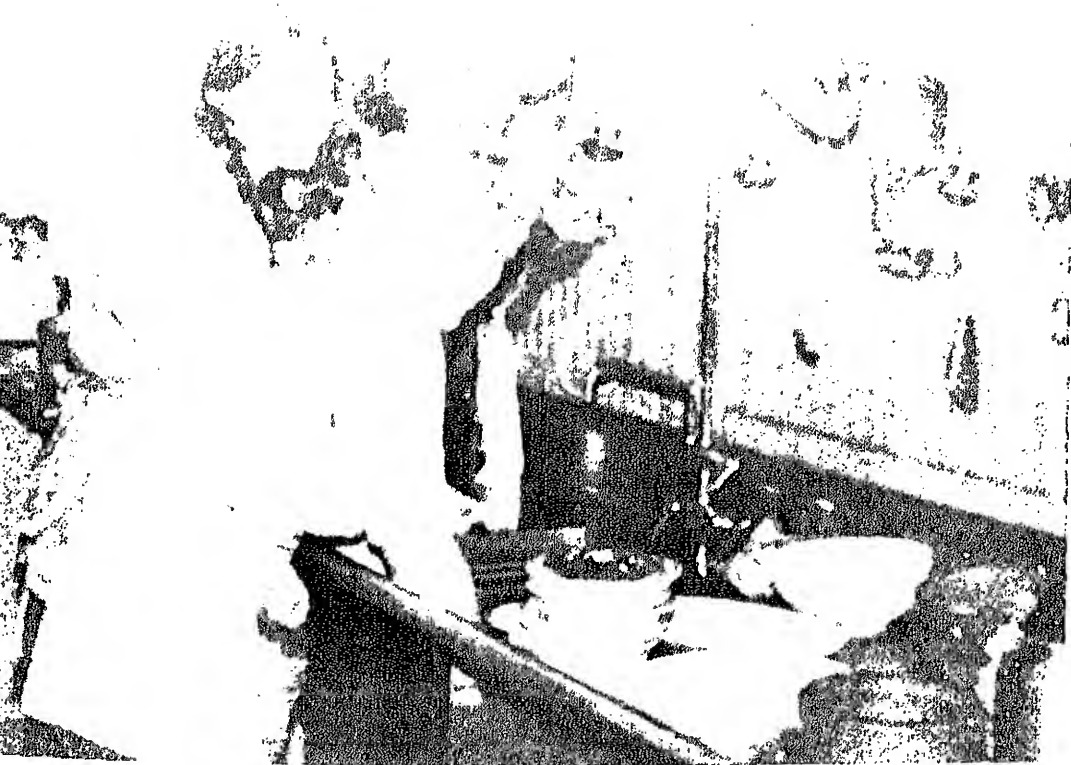
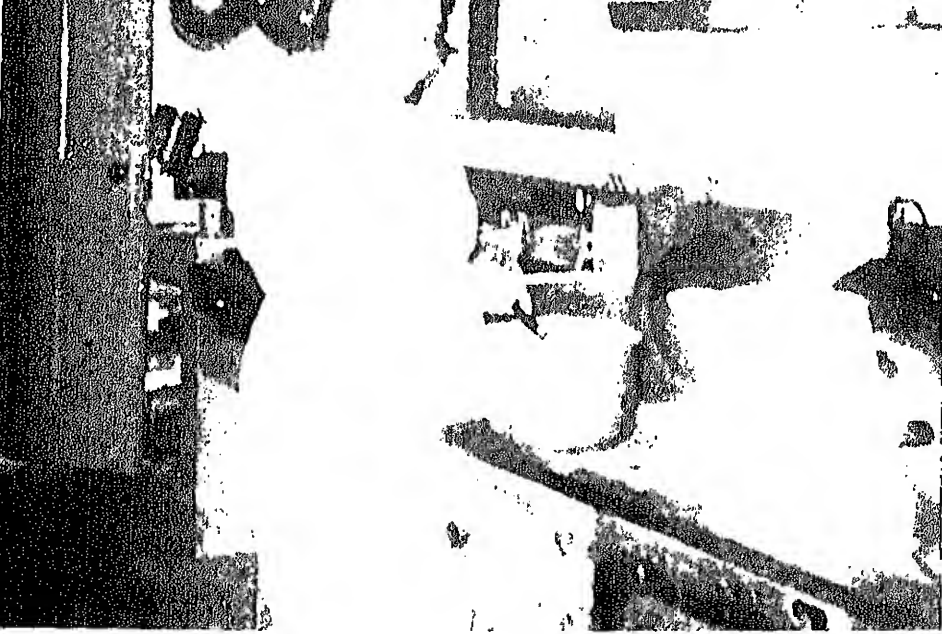


Figure 16. Nora Nilson in the kitchen, 1966.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Charles R. Williams; copy ne
Voyageurs National Park.

Figure 17. Kitchen, southwest corner, 1973. The two gir
preparing to use the Faspray dishwasher.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Charles R. Williams; copy ne
Voyageurs National Park.



porch, later turned into the auxiliary kitchen.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Charles R. Williams; c
Voyageurs National Park.

Figure 19. Blanche Williams (right) with Amy James
Ercel Martinson, a cousin, 1956, standing in
auxiliary kitchen and new laundry addition.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Charles R. Williams; c
Voyageurs National Park.

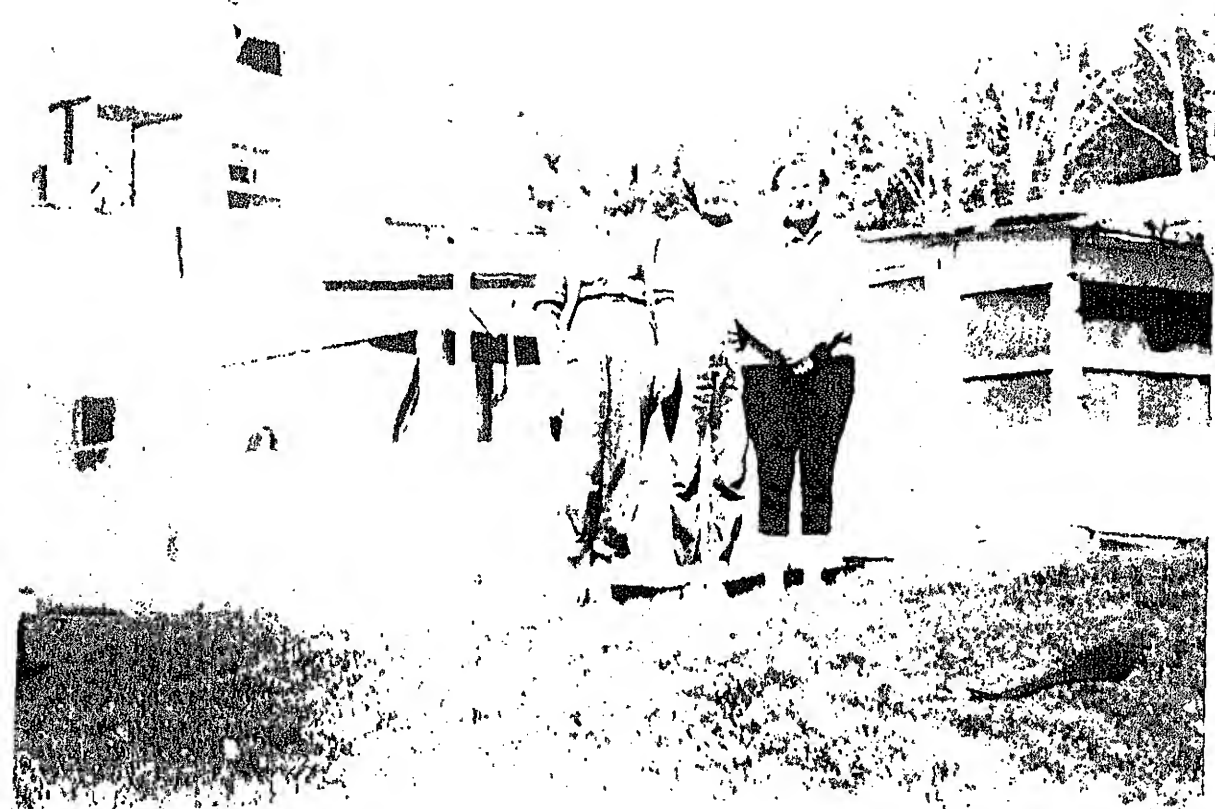
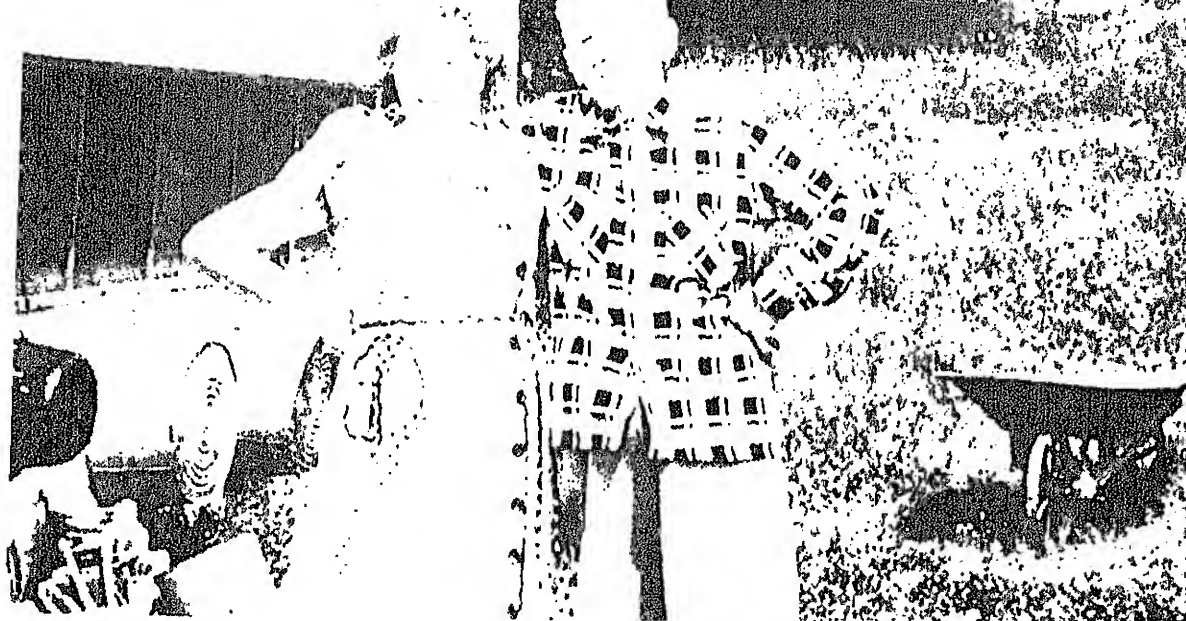


Figure 20. Barroom, northwest corner, 1942.

Collection of Koochiching County Historical Museum, International
Falls, MN.

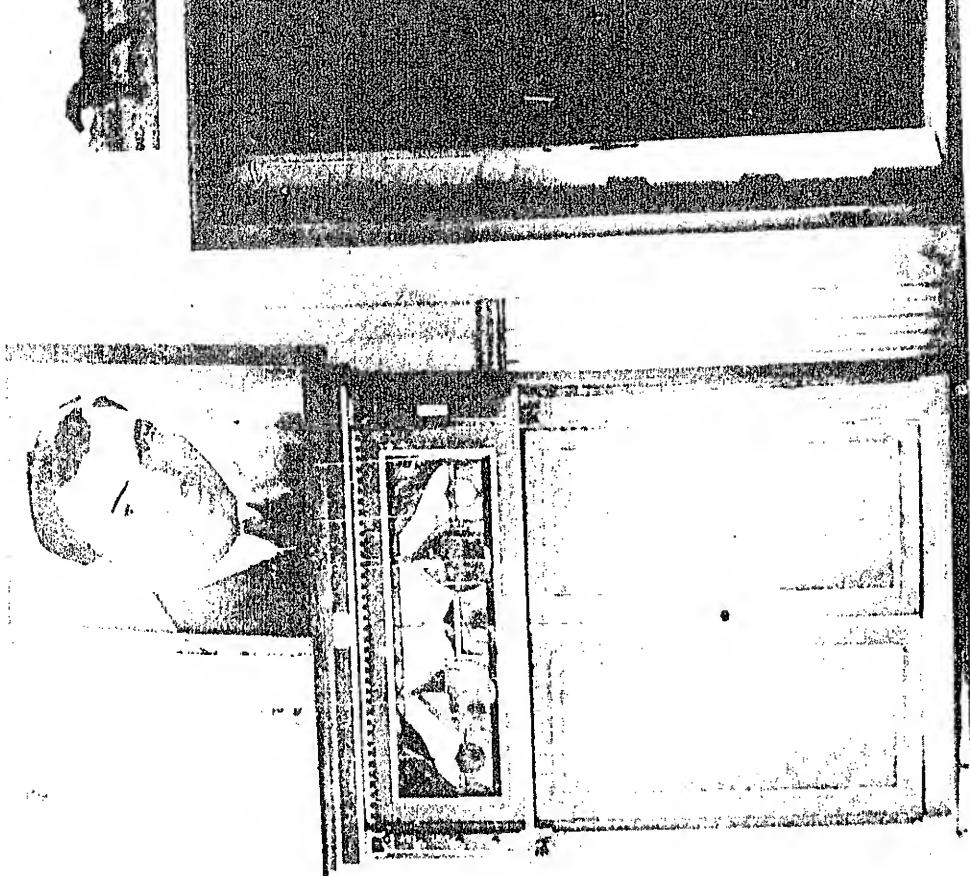


Figure 21. Bob Williams behind the bar, c.1950-56.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Charles R. Williams; co
Voyageurs National Park.

Figure 22. Barroom, south end, c.1956. Chuck and Mike
playing bumper pool.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Charles R. Williams; co
Voyageurs National Park.

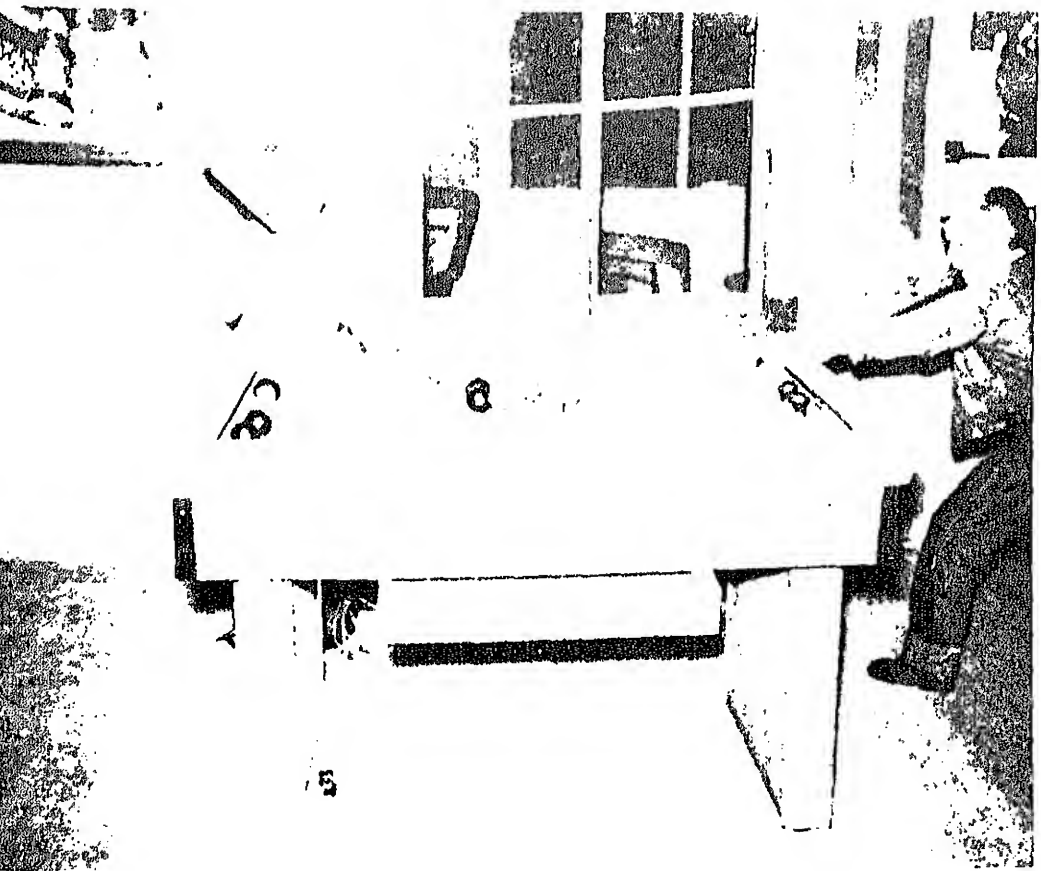


Figure 23. Barroom, north end, 1956. Mrs. Williams identified couple in the center as Margie and Myron Anderson; the people are not identified.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Charles R. Williams; copy negative
Voyageurs National Park.



Figure 24. Barroom, looking south, c.1961, Charlie Williams tending bar, Fritz Vanderhaas in right foreground, other patrons not identified.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Charles R. Williams; copy negative. Voyageurs National Park.



Figure 25. Barroom, northeast corner, 1961, with Dale W

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Charles R. Williams; copy ne
Voyageurs National Park.

Figure 26. Barroom, north end of bar, 1961. The boys a
Williams (left) and Wayne George.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Charles R. Williams; copy ne
Voyageurs National Park.

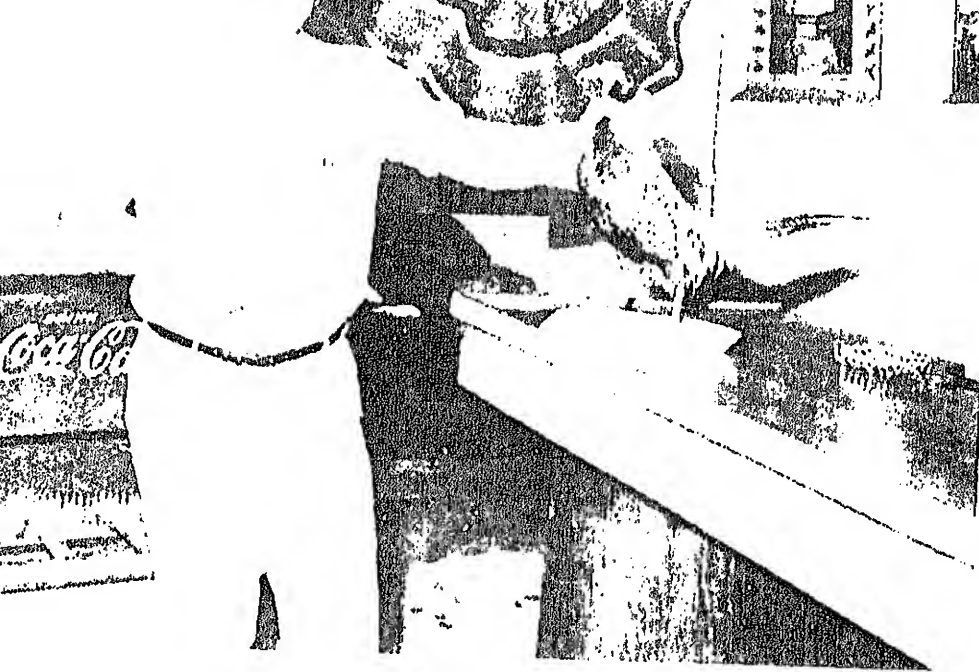


Figure 27. Barroom, north end, 1961, with Chuck Williams,
Jim Kirsila, and "Red."

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Charles R. Williams; copy
Voyageurs National Park.

Figure 28. Barroom, west side, 1961. The patrons,
Blanche and Charlie Williams, were (left to right)
Joyce Christianson, Mabel Williams, Margie Anderson,
Sherd Knies, and Herb Williams.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Charles R. Williams; copy
Voyageurs National Park.



Figure 29. Barroom, north end of bar, c.1965(?), with Mik

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Charles R. Williams; copy
Voyageurs National Park.

Figure 30. Charlie and Blanche Williams, 1966, behind

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Charles R. Williams; copy
Voyageurs National Park.



Figure 31. Barroom, looking northeast, c.1969. The oil stove was replaced with a ceiling-mounted gas unit heater in 1970.

Postcard, Voyageurs National Park collection.

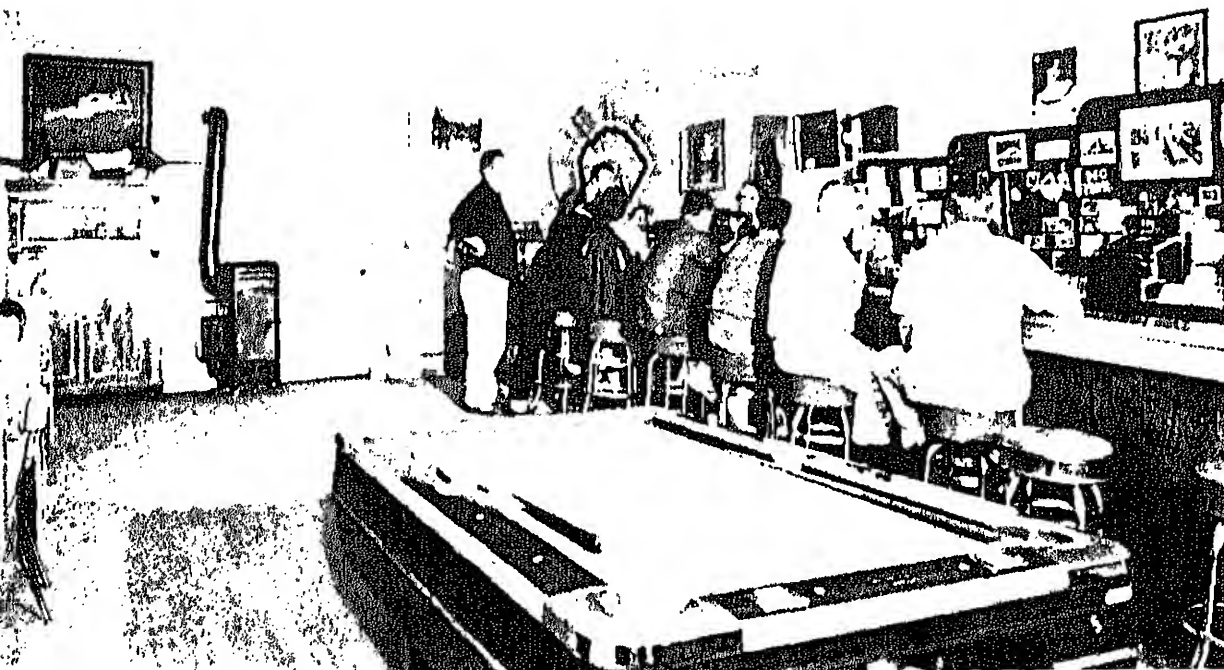


Figure 32. Back bar, 1971, by Kent Kobersteen, illustrating
Schara's article, "Out-of-the-way Inn," in Minneapolis Trib
Picture Magazine, March 14, 1971.

Collection of Minneapolis Tribune.



THE DAY IN A YEAR
IF LOOKING FOR
AND...

HERE IS A MAGNET
MAGNET WITH

HERE IS
A
JUNK

Figure 33. Barroom, looking northeast, mid-1970s, after the ceiling fans were installed (1973).

Postcard, Voyageurs National Park.

Figure 34. Barroom, looking northeast, 1986.

Voyageurs National Park photograph.

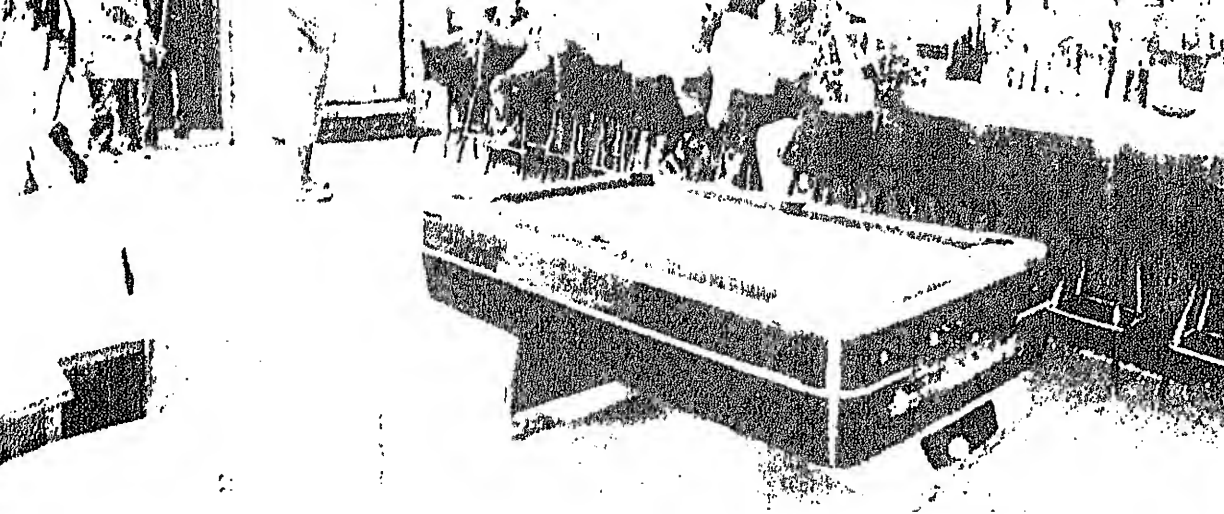


Figure 35. Barroom, looking east, 1986.

Voyageurs National Park photograph.

Figure 36. Barroom, looking southeast, 1986.

Voyageurs National Park photograph.

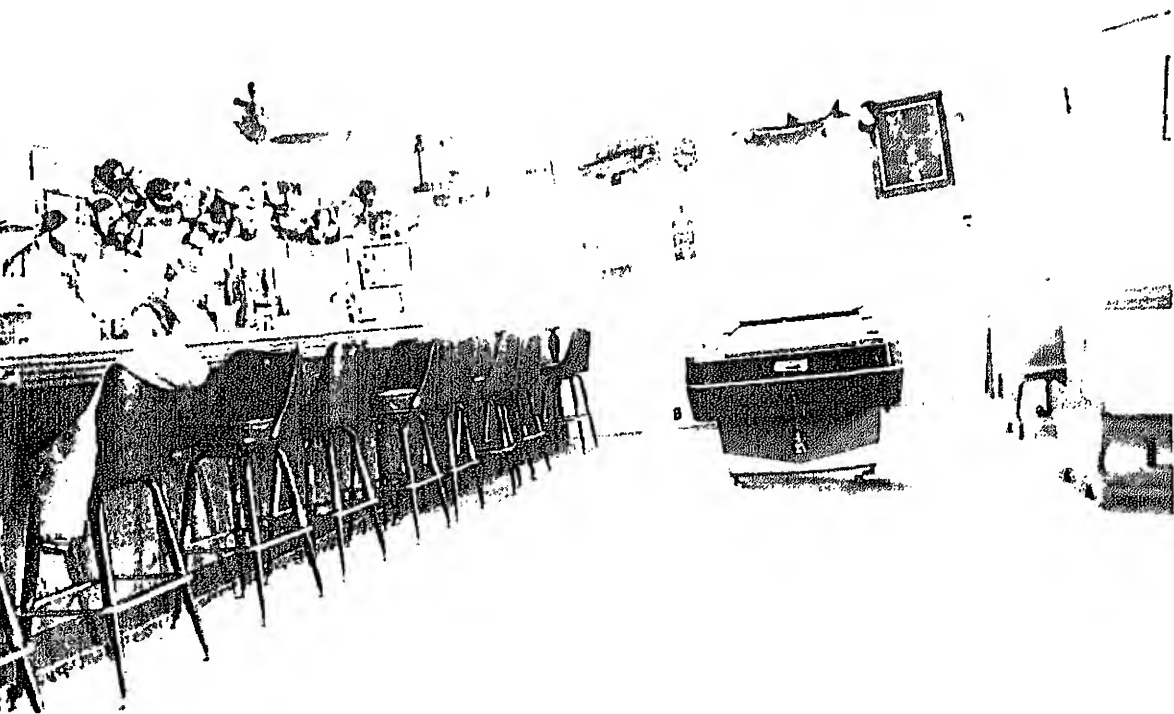
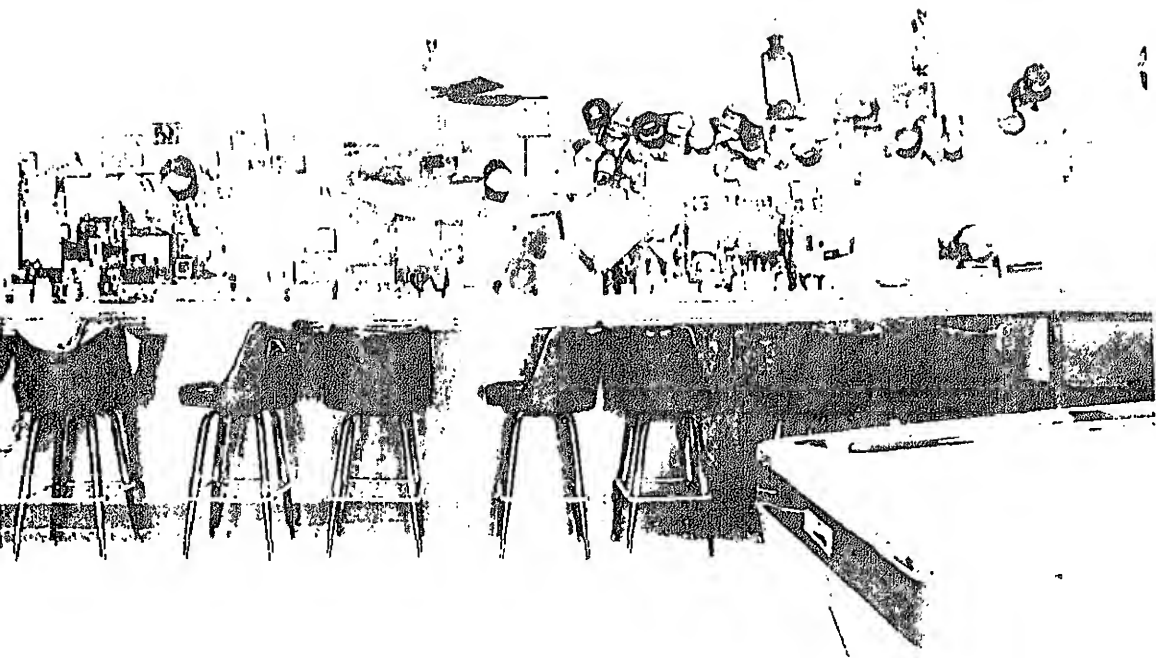


Figure 37. Barroom, looking southwest, 1986.

Voyageurs National Park photograph.

Figure 38. Barroom, northwest corner, 1986.

Voyageurs National Park photograph.

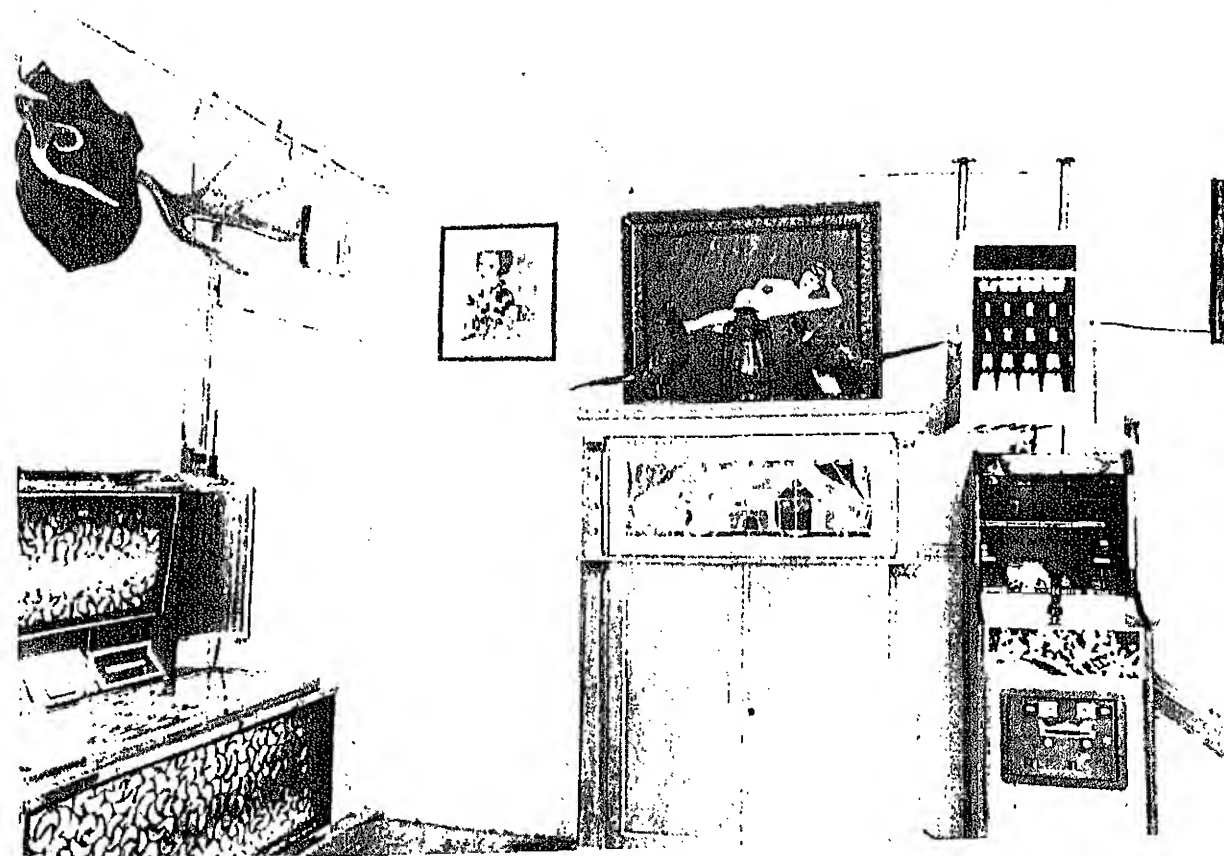


Figure 39. Unidentified bedroom, 1971: "Clean, simple room
hotel stands ready for summer rush." Kent Koberstee
graph, illustrating Ron Schara's article, "Out-of-the-
Minneapolis Tribune, Picture Magazine, March 14, 1971.

Collection of Minneapolis Tribune.

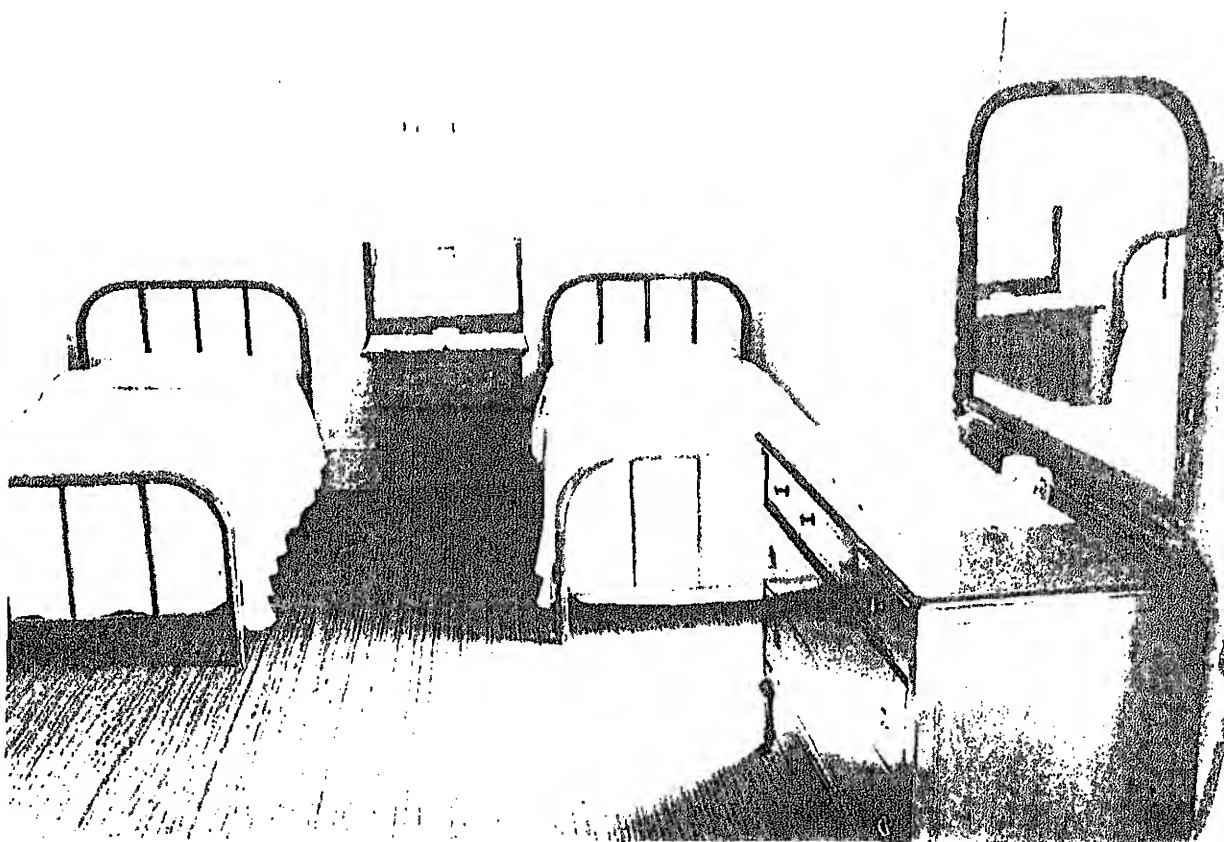


Figure 40. Bedroom No. 5, 1977. Although captioned "Typical Guest Room," this was the room occupied by the hotel operators, Mr. and Mrs. Williams.

From "Historic Structure Report," 1979.

Figure 41. Unidentified bedroom (possibly east end of No. 11), 1980.

Voyageurs National Park photograph.



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As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities to protect and conserve our water, energy and minerals, fish and wildlife, parks and recreation areas, and to ensure the wise use of all these resources. The department also has major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under federal administration.

Publication services were provided by the graphics staff of the Service Center. NPS D-56 September 1988
